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HENRY HOLBEACH

IN TWO VOLUMES

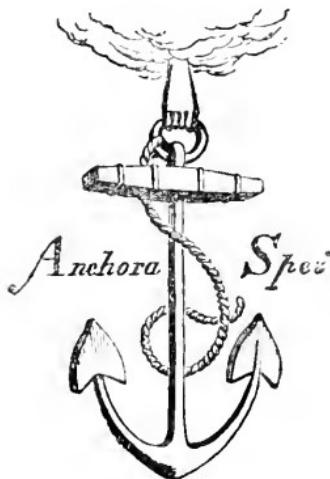


HENRY HOLBEACH

Student in Life and Philosophy

A Narrative and a Discussion

VOL. II.



ALEXANDER STRAHAN, PUBLISHER
148 STRAND, LONDON
1865

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CONTROVERSIAL LETTERS.

TO

JOHN STUART MILL, Esq.

INTELLECTUAL greatness, like yours, is something which one may recognise in so many broad words without being exposed to the charge of flattery ; and, since all the world knows it, enough is done, for the purposes of good understanding, when the recognition is made in language as brief as it is undisguised.

Permit me, then, placing your name at the head of the page, to reopen the question of Utilitarianism ; holding in my hand your book of 1863, reprinted from *Fraser's Magazine*. I have, from a very early age, been inclined to believe that current differences of opinion upon this subject may be reconciled by careful discrimination in the use of terms ; and certainly there never was a time in my mental history when the popular objections to which nearly half of your book is devoted, had any, the smallest, weight with me. They are ridiculous on the face of them, and any degree of contempt with which you wave them aside is more

than justified. Unhappily, however, it is to be feared that people who are capable of raising such difficulties are, and in the nature of things, must be incapable of understanding the solution.

Up to about page 43 of your work, then, I agree with you, in the grounds of your defence of the principle of Utility. But when you come to your justification of it, I begin to doubt. And, upon the whole, I cannot reduce the difference between us to a question of words, though I am not only willing, but eager to do so, if it should be possible. Manifestly, whatever principle is fixed upon must *coincide* with the principle of Utility, and mere logomachies are hateful.

It matters little at what point I take up the discussion, and I think your footnote, referring to Mr Herbert Spencer and his "Social Statics," published in 1850, furnishes as good an opportunity for opening the battle as anything else in your volume.

Mr Spenceer, it appears, writes to you to say, that he does not wish to be "considered an opponent of Utilitarianism;" but he goes on to say that he thinks "happiness"—assumed to be the "ultimate end of morality"—is "only partially attainable by empirical

generalisations from the observed results of conduct.” In this I entirely agree with Mr Spencer, only I should state my dissent in stronger terms than he seems to have used in addressing you. However, he proceeds to say that he thinks the end of morality is “completely attainable, only by deducing, from the laws of life and the conditions of existence, what kinds of action necessarily tend to produce happiness, and what kinds to produce unhappiness.”

Upon that you observe as follows:—“With the exception of the word *necessarily*, I have no dissent to express from this doctrine, and, *omitting that word*, I am not aware that any modern advocate of Utilitarianism is of a different opinion.”

Very good; but, as I understand Mr Spencer,—and upon that point I am at one with him,—the word *necessarily* is the very word to be insisted on. It is the precise point of difference between him and you—as—*parvis componere magna*—it is the precise point of difference (or may be representatively taken to be so) between you and me.

I do not see, never did see, never can, by any effort of the mind, suppose myself capable of seeing, how a moral system is possible at all without that word

“ necessarily.” A scheme of the universe in which there is not a necessary tendency towards the Best is mere natural history. It has no more $\eta\theta\eta$ in it than a table of geological strata, or a scale of musical notes. The essence of Morality is, *you ought*. Rules of conduct may, and indeed must, require constant revision ; but first principles must be invariable.

But this is not the only passage in your writings which seems to me to exclude the logical possibility of Ethics. In your magnificent work, “On Liberty,”(I trust this one adjective may be pardoned to me,) you say, for substance,—I must quote from memory, but shall not misrepresent you,—that there is nothing in Truth, *as* Truth, which gives it any advantage over Error. This, again, appears to me to knock the $\eta\theta\eta$ out of the whole system of things. You go on to say, I remember, that Truth is more likely to succeed than Error, because the thing that really *is* stands a chance of being over and over again rediscovered and reannounced. Since it exists, and is there, one man after another is likely to stumble upon it, and may reassert it. And that is true ; only, the question occurs, why *should* he reassert it? Why should any man assert truth as against error, if his mind has not a greater

affinity for one than for the other, and if he is not conscious that the rest of the world are like him in that respect? But, admitting these suppositions, Truth has a superiority, *quoad* Truth, over Error; and it is likely to conquer in virtue of the fact, not only that it is liable to be found out over again, and may be reasserted, but in virtue of the fact, that whoever does find it out is likely to feel *impelled* to reassert it, in full confidence that he will have others on his side, and that the Truth is desirable. I need not go on to speak of martyrs for truth; for scientific truth,—like Galileo (?); for speculative truth,—like Giordano Bruno. The point will turn up again before I have done.

Unless my memory fails me, you observe, in the same connexion, if not upon the same page of the essay "On Liberty," that you may always put down the truth by persecution, if you only persecute enough. This, again, reduces us to natural history, and makes morals impossible. No doubt, Christian missionaries have been persecuted out of Japan, and the Protestant spirit reduced to a minimum of strength in Spain. But it is totally out of my power to determine the *residuum* of truth,—whether little, or much, or none at all,—taken up and absorbed in Japan or in Spain by the powers that did the persecuting. I protest against this being con-

sidered a trivial speculation on remote possibilities. We must beg the question before we can assert the remoteness. If there is an $\eta\theta\eta$ in things,—if Truth is divine,—then it is absolutely certain not only that Spain and Japan are better off, actually or potentially, than they would have been except for what was persecuted down, but that the part they have to play in the grand scheme will be modified accordingly, and for the better. Who can tell what may happen next year in Japan? Next year, do I say? This very hour! And the event *only* can disclose to us what share the extruded or murdered missionaries may have had in directing the moral course of things.

But, of course, I do not mean to deny what is obvious. It is physically conceivable that there may be brute force enough in a particular island (say) to chop up all the people who have hold of a particular truth. What is more, it is conceivable, perhaps, that the persecuted truth may leave no seeds whatever behind it,—though that is a possibility which we cannot certainly affirm. Surely science cannot have it both ways? If Truth is really an affair of nerve-tissue, or electricity, or what-not,—who knows what it may not do? Why may it not in that case circulate itself, and take root like dandelion-seed? However, suppose the

worst to happen in some particular case,—suppose it ; —I have then to add, that if what did happen in that one case is possible to happen in all cases and for ever, then, most assuredly, there is no *rationale* of morals—no *raison d'être* for any idea of Duty or Goodness whatever. I am not aware under what supposable conditions Novalis (whom you mention in that connexion) suggested that the whole human race could do nothing better than commit suicide in mass ; but I have over and over again thought, and said, and written, from boyhood up,—that if the case I have just been putting were possible ; if, that is, Truth be not, *as* Truth, sure of conquest,—the very best thing for us all to do is to cut each others' throats all round, the last man to cut his own. I need not recall to your mind the remarkable passage in Butler's "Analogy," in which the learned prelate recognises the difficulty felt by men in deciding the question of the desirability of life apart from religion,—“Whether it be or be not eligible to live in this world.” Speaking for myself, I can only say that I feel no difficulty at all in saying that it is *not* “eligible.”

You finish the footnote to which I am referring by saying :—“My own opinion is, that in ethics, as in all other branches of scientific study, the consilience of

the results of both these processes," (deduction and empirical generalisation,) "each corroborating and verifying the other, is requisite to give to any general proposition the kind and degree of evidence which constitutes scientific proof." What I should have to observe upon this would only be a repetition of what goes before, or an anticipation of what is to follow. It is of the essence of Moral Truth to be obligatory. Its language is imperative. In other words, it is (what you appear to deny it to be, and the denial is consistent with the rest of your scheme,) *necessary*, and does *not* wait upon the "consilience" of results. I do not in the least understand an empirical, or partially empirical Science of Morals. A principle is in the nature of an ideal, and since it can never be realised, can never be verified by experience.

"Nothing is a good to human beings but in so far as it is either in itself pleasurable, or a means of attaining pleasure, or averting pain. But if this be true, the principle of utility is proved."

These are your words upon page 60 of the treatise on "Utilitarianism." And I will take them as the point of departure for what I have to say upon the whole question, but will beg leave to connect with

them the manner in which you deal with the case of the hero, or martyr, upon page 23, where I find the following passage :—

“ All honour to those who can abnegate for themselves the personal enjoyment of life, when by such renunciation they contribute worthily to increase the amount of happiness in the world ; but he who does it, or professes to do it, for any other purpose, is no more deserving of admiration than the ascetic mounted on his pillar. He may be an inspiring proof of what men can do, but assuredly not an example of what they *should*.”

I cannot forbear noticing here, that the introduction of the adverb “ *worthily* ” might, by an unfair disputant upon your side of the question, be made use of to stultify all argument upon the other side. Constantly he would have it in his power to slide off with, “ Oh, I said ‘ *worthily* ’ contribute.” And, in plain fact, I insist that your employment of that qualifying word places you in this dilemma :—Either it is necessary for your purpose, or it is not. If it is, something more than concern for human happiness is essential to virtue. If it is not, I may claim that it be rejected, and that we may read your proposition without it.

The latter alternative is the one which I shall adopt ;

because I think the word must have slipped in unawares ; and whether it did so or not, is too vague to be considered definitive. Again let it be said,—if you admit a difference, essential to morals, between contributing to human happiness and contributing “ worthily” to human happiness, you give up your own case and admit mine.

However, to proceed with the discussion. Let me begin by asking the question, Is the motive of heroic self-sacrifice necessarily the happiness of others ? In the self-sacrifice which is prompted by intense personal love it may be said to be so ; but is it the case with the self-sacrifice of principle ?

Even with respect to the self-sacrifice of affection, however, a distinction presents itself as requiring to be drawn. Not only is it true that in the rapture of the self-denial of love, no direct thought of the good or happiness of the beloved one for whom pain is undergone is present to the mind ; but surely it will not be contended that a lover dies for his mistress, or a mother faints with watching over her sick child’s cradle, because it is supposed to be for the happiness of mankind that such a sacrifice should be undergone ?

Of course, if it could be proved that such a sacrifice

was inimical to the general happiness, a question of duty would immediately arise ; and it is conceivable, I suppose, that a reason of patriotism might justify a husband in leaving a wife to suffer, without first asking her to absolve him from his immediate personal obligation,—I say it is perhaps conceivable, but I wish to speak guardedly upon so nice a question of high casuistry, rightly to determine the like of which would be the labour of a lifetime.

But there is another step to be taken. Let us assume it proved,—as I suppose it *may* be assumed,—that it is good for mankind at large that personal affection should make great sacrifices for its immediate objects,—let us assume that, I say. It would then follow that the self-sacrifice of affection is a duty,—if your criterion be the true one. But that is absurd. For if self-sacrifice be a duty, it is required to know in what degree it is so. How far is a mother bound to go in the labour of self-destruction, or slow suicide, for the sake of a baby?—for the sake of a bad husband or a bad son? Nay, if self-sacrifice for love be a duty in certain cases, then love itself must be a duty in certain cases. In other words, an involuntary emotion may justly be compelled, which is, again, absurd.

The truth is, that the self-sacrifice of affection is

neither right nor wrong in itself,—it is not moral at all,—though, as I have just endeavoured to make out, your criterion implies that it is.

But now let us pass on to the question of the self-sacrifice of principle.

Suppose a martyr bound to the stake, and ready to give up his breath for a truth. Suppose it made known to him, (or suppose him to be hallucinated into the belief,) that the world will come to an end in five minutes, without any consequences of his martyrdom, good or bad, being possible to others. Would that make the smallest difference in his obligation? I apprehend not.

With regard to mere sympathy, it is difficult to conceive a man stripped naked of all hope of it, either here or hereafter. At all events, a man so stripped could not be a martyr. The steadfastness of the martyr will, doubtless, be in proportion to the strength of his hope of sympathy. But what is the essential element of the sympathy?—sympathy with increase of happiness, or with something else?

Some very flippant things have been said about the propagators of “negative” creeds, and it has been confidently asserted that a martyr for atheism is in-

conceivable. I entirely disagree. I can conceive a martyr for any form of opinion, and do not doubt that people have, as a matter of fact, suffered pain and death for all such forms. I will go further, and will come so close to your own thesis, that a less subtle thinker than yourself might think me coquettish in holding off from a deliberate embrace. It is, perhaps, conceivable that a man might die for atheism, *finding himself* upon the belief that atheism was good for the human race.

But pray note the two words which are put in italics in the last sentence. The principle, or opinion upon which a martyr may have founded the course of conduct that brings him to the stake, is one thing; the force, or motive, into which his opinion is sublimated for the purpose of self-sacrifice, is another. Therefore, although an atheistic martyr might say, "I die for the good of my kind," the true rendering of his words would be, "I die because, having sought the good of my kind, I am now challenged in the search, and feel bound to die rather than say that the search was wrong either in motive or direction."

But the question is, *why* bound?

As a matter of fact, did any human being ever submit to death, or commit himself to any career of in-

tense abnegation, specifically for the good of others, with an eye to the production of the greatest possible amount of happiness? I confess I do not believe it, and cannot conceive it. The sacred fury of the philanthropist I quite understand. The impulse to communicate pleasure, and multiply social chances of pleasure, is perfectly intelligible. It is as easy to conceive a man incurring loss of personal comfort in a career of philanthropy as in a career of beetle-collecting, or travelling in strange lands, or chemical experiment. But zeal to communicate pleasure has not, I apprehend, anything necessarily moral in it.

Every man who makes sacrifices for principle—for the sake of something which he believes to be innocent or beneficial, but in which an attempt is made to arrest him,—dies for what may be called, and indeed is, the *Point of Honour* as between himself and the Moral order of the Universe,—briefly, he dies for the Point of Honour.

Let us suppose—whether it was true or not—let us suppose that Galileo was put to the rack for maintaining that the earth moved. Surely he had no idea of promoting human happiness in his mind! Surely a man does not go to bed upon screws and pulleys because he is convinced that a certain point in astro-

nomy should be published, for the sake of the greatest happiness of the greatest number !

Again, let it be supposed that somebody had succeeded in convincing Galileo that it would tend to destroy human happiness to publish the doctrine of the earth's motion, Galileo would probably in that case have said, " Well, then, I shall keep my discovery to myself."

But now, let us once more suppose that the Inquisition, under these circumstances, insists upon his *publishing* his discovery. He refuses—says he intends to make an esoteric doctrine of it. The Inquisition put him to the rack for his reticence. Still, he refuses.

Now, it is *conceivable* that Galileo may so refuse, for a good many reasons :—

Out of obstinacy, or, however, mere resoluteness of will.

Out of a (sublimated) regard for the general happiness,—such a regard for the happiness of mankind in general as would represent personal affection indefinitely diffused.

Or, from what theologians call (and rightly call) "holy fear"—from a regard for the will of God, as he, Galileo, reads it.

Or, upon the Point of Honour pure and simple.

But what I maintain is, that unless he is bound to stand his ground upon this Point of Honour, (a phrase which we will provisionally employ, with your kind permission,) there is no logical possibility of any other ground, considered as moral. That, unless that *datum* come first, there is, for instance, no room for religion or philanthropy either.

I need not, in this connexion, consider the relation of Conscience and Theism, as mutually implied; but that Conscience must be postulated,—its prime law,—its axiom,—be found, before philanthropy, or concern for the general happiness, can justify itself,—*that* is what I have to show here, and I believe my task to be a very simple one.

I confess I cannot see, and do not know how it can be maintained, (probably it never was maintained,) that the prime or sole duty of each separate human being is to promote the happiness of all other human beings. Every man's first obligation is, not to *injure* any other man—*i.e.*, not to do anything which tends to deprive him of the same chance of happiness which he himself possesses.

If Galileo, having, we will say, invented the telescope, is credibly assured that, as soon as ever he makes

public his invention, ten thousand people will within a year and a day burn their eyes out looking at the sun, is that a reason which obliges Galileo to keep his telescope all to himself?

It cannot possibly be such a reason. For if there be a Moral Law, a Moral End, an $\eta\theta\eta$ in the world at all, it is utterly impossible for any one man, or for all men put together, to tell how *much* pain may possibly fall within its scope, and be an actual instrument in the development of its scheme. It is perfectly supposable that the blinding of ten thousand people would be a desirable thing.

“Yes,” I hear somebody say, “in order that ten times ten thousand may be benefited.”

But no, that way of putting it will not do. You must say,—if your “happiness” argument is to be anything to the purpose,—you must say, In order that an overplus of happiness may be the result.

But what is such an overplus of happiness as justifies the risk? If ten thousand and ten men have their eyesight improved, is that a sufficient reason for putting out the eyes of ten thousand? And if not, *why* not, upon the “greatest happiness of the greatest number” principle?

Imagine the inventor of the telescope to have with-

held his invention because the Church told him it would be the means of injuring ten thousand people. We should then have had no Newton perhaps, no Herschel, no Baily. It is required to know if the happiness felt and communicated, by astronomers who have been indebted to the telescope, would, when added up, outweigh the loss of happiness to ten thousand people from the burning out of their eyeballs ?

Again, if the *amount* of happiness is to determine the question,—and the amount it *must* be,—it is required to know how many horses or dogs may be tortured to make one man happy,—tortured, I mean, not of choice, but of necessity? What proportion would the “happiness” of, say, a Patagonian, or a half-imbecile, or a downright idiot, bear to the “happiness” of Mr Tennyson; and supposing they came into collision, which must go to the wall, and why?

Again, there may be in the universe beings of an order far superior in capacity of pleasure to man, and those beings may be directly affected by whatever is done among men. Supposing it to be so, one angel may have to count for a thousand men, one archangel for a thousand angels, and one God for all men and angels and animals put together.

In short, I cannot see that the “greatest happiness” test can be made *moral*, apply it in whatsoever way you please. Indeed it obviously cannot. For *Quantity in action is Force*, and nothing but force. Now Force is *Must*. But Morality is *Ought*: a sacred Necessity, with a Reason Why behind it.

I do not forget, in writing this, your brief answer to Mr Herbert Spencer. I quite catch the meaning of what you say when you observe that the principle of utility amounts simply to this—that the greatest possible amount of happiness is desirable. Be it so. All I have to remark is that the proposition is a barren one—in *human hands*. It amounts to saying that God has made men to desire happiness. No doubt. “Then men should seek happiness.” Certainly; but at all costs? “No; the greatest *amount* of happiness is the object.” Very good—only I utterly deny that this brings you any nearer, or that the problem of quantity is soluble.

Of course it may be said that all Evil is simply Pain. Physical evil is pain to my body—moral evil is pain to my conscience; and it would be absurd not to admit that a man who is convinced that the greatest happiness principle is the formal *ratio* of ethics, may feel that his principle has the same sanctions as that of any

transcendental moralist in the world. Obviously, he may ; and most probably he does. But has he imported the *sanctions*, or do they inhere in his doctrine? That is the question. Unless some means of discriminating happiness from pleasure is found and put in its proper place in the scheme of such a man, I maintain that he is moral at the expense of his logical consistency. If we say that the formula should be the greatest *pleasure* of the greatest number consistent with the final wellbeing of the greatest number, we take another element into account ; just as you (unintentionally ?) do yourself, when you use that little adverb “worthily” in speaking of the martyr or the hero.

With respect to the question of preferability of pleasure,—preferability pure and simple,—I find you, on page 15, maintaining that there can be no “appeal from the verdict of the only competent judges” which of “two classes of pleasures”—namely, the “higher” and the “lower” are to be preferred ; and these “only competent judges” are, you say, “those who are qualified by knowledge of both.” Their decision is final ; or, if they differ, the decision of “the majority amongst them.”

Here, again, we are face to face with the old difficulty.

Why—*how*—should any decision by “majority” have, of necessity, any moral quality at all? Who is to decide whether or not the “majority” *have* experienced the two classes of pleasures? How can numbers add up to anything but power? How can any force become Right, without an addition to it?—which addition is the thing we are in search of. Suppose you, Mr Mill, were, in a community of thousands, the only man who had tasted both classes of pleasures; but the rest of them found you an inconvenient person, and resolved to extinguish you because your ideal of happiness was different from theirs? What is your answer? I do not mean your safeguard in practice, (though the one must essentially coincide with the other,) but your answer in logic.

We have not yet exhausted this little question of majorities. For, in plain stubborn fact, the Highest Pleasure may be said to be for ever in a minority of one; which minority is for ever struggling to make itself into a majority. This is, in other terms, the doctrine of progress. No present realised or apprehended better is final: it is no sooner touched with the finger than another is apprehended somewhere else; so that the majority is always, as a matter of experience, against

the Best Pleasure ; which must, of necessity, be something untasted yet.

It is of course possible to introduce here a definition of the “higher pleasures” which shall exclude this difficulty ; but, as I think, only upon condition that the definitory shall include something more than pleasure ; shall include the *tertium quid* of which we speak.

That the pleasures, for example, of the intellect and imagination are, in themselves, preferable, *as pleasures*, to those of “sense” (so called,—I only use language of accommodation,) is not, in my opinion, susceptible of proof. Nor, indeed, can I conceive that there should be *any* key to unlock the question of pleasure, (either in quality or kind,) except a private key—the key which every man carries in his own bosom. Every individual has his own idea of what is best ; and that *is* best—for *him*—until he sees another “best,” which is better still. The one thing which is clear to me, and to every unsophisticated conscience, is that I have no right to try to force *my* best upon *him* ; no right to endeavour to prevent his seeking his own best. Admitting then, or rather proclaiming, that every human being should endeavour to cultivate and promote the best (which he can discern), and neglect no

opportunity of doing this in such a way as to promote human happiness, or rather so as not to hinder it,—I fail to discover in this any criterion of ethics.

The first principle of Practical Morality appears to me to be that

Every man is bound to obey, at all costs, his own highest impulse.

From which is derived the negative—

No man shall attempt to limit the activity of another who claims to be seeking to obey such impulse, unless that activity limits his own activity.

If it be asked whether “highest impulse” means *strongest* impulse, the answer is—it means the strongest impulse any man can feel within the limits of consistency with his own ideal, or conception of duty. Plausible objections against this statement of the case will be considered by me under another heading; but in the meanwhile I may observe that no man has a right to prevent (for example) a dog doing what he pleases, so long as the dog injures no one: and, in like manner, no man has a right to prevent (for example) a Patagonian, however barbarous or degraded, from doing what he pleases, so long as he injures no one. If a man violates his *own* ideal, that is his own affair,

an affair for the court of conscience ; or externally, it is an affair for the Church. But it is no affair of civil compulsion.

If it seem to Galileo that the highest thing he can do is to assert the motion of the earth, let him do it. He is not only entitled, he is *bound* to do it. The moment you challenge his right by applying force, you make it a Point of Honour from which he cannot recede. And however low in the scale the end or duty chosen by the individual may be, the case is precisely the same, supposing the individual can see no higher. The moment you turn on your force to stop him, that moment the pursuit of his end becomes a point of honour to him.

I use this phrase advisedly, though at perhaps some little risk of misconception. The point of duty is, in strict truth, the point of honour ; and we may discern, under that name, the formal *ratio* of ethics in the single word *Truthfulness*.

That thing is Absolutely Right which is Absolutely True—*i.e.*, absolutely at one with the Nature of Things in General.

That thing is Relatively Right—*i.e.*, right to the individual—which he himself believes to be absolutely right, (whether it actually is so or not.)

Truthfulness is the lowest term of any man's self-sacrificing persistence in what he *believes* to be right.

No man can be sure, *as against any other man*, that he knows or feels that which is best, (though, of course, he may know for his own guidance.)

If A may dictate to B, then may B to A ; and C to D ; and so on all round the alphabet, which is absurd.

Truthfulness, or adherence, at all risks, to the thing perceived to exist, is our only guarantee for the possession of any right whatever. It is every man's own separate *raison d'être* as against every other man.

If I assert that Jupiter has four moons, because I believe I have seen them, or begin to eat a pottle of strawberries, because I believe I rightfully may, and then somebody comes and says, "No, you shall not,"—I resist him. For, if he may deny my right to a pottle of strawberries, why may he not deny my right to a mouthful of air, or a drop of water?—in other words, why not my right to exist at all?

Or, if he may deny my right to inform the man Theodore that Jupiter has four moons, why may he not deny my right to inform my mother Hester by a glance of the eye that I love her?

Thus the Moral Criterion for each separate man

is—*conformity to the truth of things, as that truth appears to him.*

To prevent or endeavour to prevent another realising his own idea of such conformity, is injury—unless his procedure prevents my endeavouring to realise *my* idea.

The greatest happiness of the greatest number *must* result from these two points, realised in practice :—

1. Every man shall, at all risks, seek to carry out his own highest and best idea of duty.

2. No man shall interfere with any other man in his efforts to do that which he conceives to be right.

It is impossible to reduce scientific Morality to lower terms than these. Practically these canons are not perfectly obeyed ; never can be perfectly obeyed. No principle can ever be realised.

But the canons are immutable. And the perpetual effort to realise them must result in the *Divine expediency of constant approximation.*

For human shortcomings another provision occurs, in another sphere,—the sphere, namely, of *mutual accommodation or allowance.* But that topic is not now before me.

It may be said that *conformity to the truth of*

things, translated into sensation, is happiness. No doubt,—if complete, and unconditioned. But, if incomplete, and conditioned (as it must be), it need not be pleasure in any sense of which outsiders can judge. It is true that if every human being could obey, and did obey his highest impulse, without distinction of any kind, there would be perfect happiness—but *then*, what need of ethics, or rules of conduct? That is heaven; or the millennium;—the best of all possible worlds. The question is, What is the formal *ratio* of duty when we have, actually, pain or limitation, contending against possibilities of pleasure in obeying the highest impulse? And I reply, it is TRUTHFULNESS *from within outward*—LIBERTY *from without inward*. This, I maintain, offers guidance. But I can see no rule of conduct, no glimmer of guidance, in saying that there ought to be the greatest possible amount of happiness in the world. Of course there ought. And what then?

At the risk of being tedious, I will go again over the main ground, making some additions, perhaps, in the way of inference.

Every man feels that he has a right to do all that he chooses to do, so long as he does not injure others. I hold my right to life itself by the same tenure as that which entitles me to say that Jupiter has four moons.

If I have not the right in question, no more have you ; no more has any one. Within the limits of our ideas or capacities our rights must be the same. If you deny my right by force, I assert it by force—that is to say, I resist you. And the whole truth of things, from the summits to the abysses, is impawned on my side. This is the UNIVERSAL, OR ABSOLUTE POINT OF HONOUR. It is CONSCIENCE. It is DUTY. It is, in fine, the formal ratio of Ethics.

That we have, in this principle, the only foundation for hope that the greatest happiness of the greatest number will ever be realised is certain. I do not doubt—returning for a moment to a point dismissed, and speaking with special regard to page 15 of your essay—I do not doubt, I say, that the happiness-ideal of the cultivated European is higher than that of the Patagonian—nobody seriously or permanently doubts it perhaps ; though that cannot be affirmed, and might plainly be denied. But what security have I, as against a dissentient Patagonian, except in the principle of liberty? Unless I am able to assert, as against him who practises the *lower*, my own right to choose the *higher*, I may as well give up talking about morals. Life is a game of mere force, and the “Divine will” merely means *les gros bataillons*. In truth, the educ-

tion of the race depends upon those who have reached the higher holding their own place as of *right* against mere force. And if I claim the right for myself, how can I deny it to the Patagonian?

Thus, then, if ever I have to die for a conviction, (which Heaven forbid, if the death were to be a painful one,) I shall die, not because I want to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number, but because, in maintaining my own truth, I shall believe myself to be allying myself to that truth of the universe which must coincide with the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Here, again, I return upon the point from which I started, and find myself, when I employ the word "*must*," insisting upon that very word "*necessarily*" which Mr Herbert Spencer used, which you rejected, and which, in my opinion, is of the very essence of the case. Thns I agree, upon this point, with Mr Herbert Spencer; and my confidence in my own conclusion, as to the formal *ratio* of morals, *coinciding* as it does with his own, is not lessened by the reflection that I had, many years ago, reached it by a different path, in total ignorance of his great work on "Social Statics," and also in ignorance of a writer of the last century, whose solution of the question

is not only coincident, but absolutely identical with my own.*

In your "Dissertations," I find you writing, in regard to Bentham, the following pregnant sentences :—

" Man is never recognised by him as a being capable of pursuing spiritual perfection as an end,—of desiring, for its own sake, the conformity of his own character to his standard of excellence, without hope of good or fear of evil from other source than his own inward consciousness. Even in the more limited form of Conscience, this great fact in human nature escapes him. Nothing is more curious than the absence of recognition, in any of his writings, of the existence of conscience as a thing distinct from philanthropy, from affection for God or man, and from self-interest in this world or in the next."

As it would scarcely be possible to express my own view more definitely than these very words of yours do it, I have been at great pains to try and convince myself, that the difference between your side of the question and the side from which I cannot detach myself, is only a difference of words. But I cannot so

* See Appendix.

convince myself—cannot see, with you, that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the Criterium of Ethics, though the Criterium, when found, must coincide with the Utility upon which you found yourself.

H. H.

TO

THE REV. F. D. MAURICE, M.A.

WHEN I have read in Mr Tennyson's last Idyll
of King Arthur how

“Queen Guinevere had fled the court, and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury,”

I have often wondered where Queen Guinevere would
have had to fly to in modern days :—

“For I will draw me into sanctuary,”

said the queen ; but in the hour that is she would
have looked in vain for any such sanctuary recognised
of all the world. It is true, a modern Guinevere
would not be threatened with the “flaming death ;”
only, perhaps, with moral dissolution. If she con-
sented to “fly” with Lancelot to his “strong castle
over seas,” it is possible, though by no means certain
—nay, on a large induction of the *most* difficult cases,

not even probable, for the law is a rough net that does not take up fine difficulties, and only provides for coarse badness—it is possible that, if she consented, the knot might be cut; and Lancelot might “hide” her, and “hold her with his life against the world.” But Lancelot might under pressure change his mind; or might lose his wits or his courage; and then, where is Guinevere? Nor, supposing him a true man, and supposing Guinevere to have decided with him that the best being bad, nothing remained but to seek the strong castle over seas, is the case without difficulty. Guinevere would not be “received,” nor do I insist that she ought to be. Unless Lancelot were really the flower of knighthood, and unless she had herself great force of character, she is still threatened with the penalty of moral dissolution. And it is a sad penalty. Nobody loves Becky Sharp, surely; but nobody, with a conscience, ever shut up “Vanity Fair” upon the moral isolation of even that bad woman—a Vivien of modern times—without a pang, and a reflection that there is something wanting in our social arrangements.

In the days of Lancelot of the Lake certain forms of moral isolation were perhaps hardly possible. Men and women were so perpetually being forced back

upon primitive needs, that they often came to feel their want of each other too keenly to stand upon ceremony. A lady who had happened to owe her life to Guinevere's intercession, (the sort of thing that was often occurring,) would hardly feel justified in cutting her the next week. A knight, even Sir Galahad, between whom and a descending battle-axe Sir Lancelot had interposed his own body, would feel the tie of brotherhood, underlying all errors and even crimes, too strongly to hold himself at an unsocial distance afterwards.

But, whatever befell, there was help in the bosom of the Church, just as the severity of the Jewish code was, in practice, (and not only in practice, but as to its indirect influence on the minds of the people,) greatly mitigated by the existence of Cities of Refuge, and by the notion of inviolability which was attached to the horns of the altar. There was time given, in consequence, for what I have heard called “shaking down.” Room was found for the counter-play of circumstance and feeling upon an old state of facts, and for the growth of something like prescription with regard to the new. There was a quiet, retired space, in which the lights of past passion, (for there is light in passion, whatever the colour of the fire,) and the lights of present reflec-

tion, might seek to blend into truth and justice. In a word, there was a Sanctuary.

The foundation of the Sanctuary idea is, of course, that of being—pursuer and pursued, the injured and the injurer—in the presence of a Superiority under whose infinite Shadow all differences, even the biggest, are dwarfed into practical invisibility; the inevitable incessant vicariousness of life being felt to reach to the very source and fountain of Life—whatever may be the symbol of the vicariousness, whether altar or cross. This is an idea which, obviously, can never die out of the human mind until religion itself expires. But in modern society where is the Sanctuary? I could myself tell a tragic story, in which one of two blood-relations, who were alienated, (one alleging injury, which the other denied,) wrote to the other, "Let us sink this difference. Let us remain apart, if you will; but let us remember the ancient love, founding ourselves upon the love which is the root of all other. Let us meet in church—in opposite aisles, if you will, but let us meet—in the presence of Him between whom and both of us the distance is so great that the distance between you and me is less than a mathematical point." But do you at all think this appeal was listened to? Absolutely, no. And I see reason

to fear that the idea to which it appealed is pretty well smothered in the average modern mind. *If it were not so, if it floated about in the very air, as it ought to do, do you think—I know you do not—that the first thought of a forlorn woman would be that when the new life came it must be strangled out?*

Here is a new word, or a word “as old as new,” applying to Infanticide; and to a great many other matters! The advocates of freedom, from Milton downwards, have been taunted by those who, as he says, “mean licence” when they “cry liberty”—

“For who loves that must first be wise and good”—

with the consequences of their teaching. But this comes from not allowing for what (in the jargon of the day) is called the “positive side” of their teaching. One modern poet (since Coleridge and Wordsworth) has clearly discerned this, and said it,—I mean Mr Henry Taylor, in his “Lago Lugano,” in the verses beginning,

“Civil and moral liberty are twain;”

in other words, liberty is indeed licence, unless as much weight be put on in one direction as is taken off in the other:—

“ One House of Refuge in this dreary waste
Was, through God’s mercy, by our fathers built;
That house, the Church. O England, if the guilt
Of pride and greed thy grandeur have abased,
Thy liberty endanger’d, here be placed
Thy trust; thy freedom’s garment, if thou wilt,
To piece by charters and by statutes strive,
But to its personal rescue, haste, oh, haste!
And save its soul alive.”

Ah, “save its *soul* alive!” To do this implies a direct positive action on the part of religious minds and religious institutions, for which we have not yet discovered the formula; but in the meanwhile a conservative, transitional activity *is* possible. It is possible—men like you and your coadjutors have proved, and are hourly proving the possibility—for the Church to pick up, shelter, and provide for the provisional existence of germs of new moral life which are flung off in the shape (at first) of differentiated growths, which, but for shelter, would perish by the wayside, being trodden under foot of men, or devoured by the fowls of the air—the evil birds of the prince of that dominion. I am humbly but most earnestly of opinion that no truer service could be rendered to the Lord of Life.

A great modern novelist, and almost the only one who has united rich intelligence and complete impartiality with complete freedom from cynicism, has in-

troduced into a story the Church in its character of a Sanctuary. Dr Kenn, in the "Mill on the Floss," presents us with some sort of type of what it might be and do through its ministers. And there are souls who, in other ways, have found in yourself another such type. Between him and you there is the difference that exists between a single torch and a beacon-fire set upon a hill, or a cresset flaming from a tower. For a function such as yours there needs a larger tolerance than could well consist with such a nature as Dr Kenn's. Coleridge proclaimed, many years ago, in which of our English institutions lay the largest capacity of toleration. "As to myself," he says, "I not only know the Church Establishment to be tolerant, but I see in it the greatest, if not the sole, safe bulwark of toleration." There was a time when I myself—a (political) Dissenter then and now—should have thought this unmeaning. I have gathered the meaning of it in proportion as I have gathered, year after year, along with others since 1851, that persons who represent institutions can so transcend, without transgressing, the limits within which they have to move, as to touch the most forbidding boundary-lines with a light of invitation, and flood out the distant gloominess of a fortified place in the luminous hospitality of a Sanctuary.

And, having so learnt, I devoutly invite you, yet not I, but a mighty multitude of souls, to crown the lesson. You will know for a true voice the voice that speaks, and you will understand the message. For the message is to *you*, of all men under the cope of heaven.

[This is rather vague, though it has, here and there, touches of natural eloquence. Whether the letter ever reached its address or not, in the form in which it here stands, or in any other, and what the writer expected to come of it, I do not know. Never did I know a man so indifferent as he was to what are called "results;" never a man so given to sending arrows into the dark. But evidently he did not drop the subject, for I find among his papers, headed with the initials "F. D. M." the following paragraphs, which seem, from the manner in which the word "indeed" is used in the first line, to be a deliberate continuation.—ED.]

I am, indeed, distinctly of opinion that the Church

Establishment of this country has proved itself, and may yet prove itself again, a “bulwark of toleration,” without which freedom of life and conscience would fare badly. It does not follow that it is right that it should be maintained, and certainly I, a political Dissenter, think the Church should be dissevered from the State, or, at least, that it should never have been connected with it. It does not follow, because reading back the course of events, I find a certain thing has in fact served certain good uses, that the thing itself was good—to say nothing of the fact that this inferential manner of looking at the past for historic purposes is very much like that manner of looking forward to the future which is called fortune-telling, or, however, rash, ill-judged prophecy. It is totally impossible we can have the whole of the case before us, either as to the past or as to the future. If, however, it should appear that the existence of a Church Establishment is likely, in this country, to serve the cause of enlightened toleration, that might at least so far affect my views as a Dissenter as to induce me to abstain from all purely aggressive and destructive courses of action towards the Establishment. And, in point of fact, I have always felt inclined to side with those who say, “Let the Church have free liberty to develop herself from *within*, and

then she will, in the nature of things, detach herself from the State."

I have been told that Coleridge looked forward with dread to what he called the plebification of knowledge. I think he had some reason. The plebification of opinion is a terrible thing to contemplate, involving as it will at first—involving as it has already begun to involve—one of the ugliest of tyrannies, (I grant not the ugliest,) namely, the tyranny of half-intelligent mobs. Against this form of tyranny the Church Establishment has already begun to oppose a bulwark. I need not refer to your own case, or say (what is strictly true) that a Dissenting minister who disavowed belief in the eternal torment of separate souls would never be able to hold his own. Nor need I go further, and point out how very wide a tract of ground the Articles of the Church are found, in fact, to cover; nor need I add that individual members of the Church of England would be fighting their separate battles at a great disadvantage, if it were not for the immense prestige of a learned and eminent institution which cannot prevent their exercising the functions of religious teachers, because a majority of their brethren reject their religious creed; which surrounds them with symbols of sanctity; and, to be plain, backs them with its re-

venues. This does not at all imply that the battle of liberty of conscience began to be fought within the Church Establishment,—though that may have been so; nor that, if the Church were now disconnected from the State, I would be one to suggest the connexion. It only implies that, things being as they are, the power of half-thinking mobs of “intelligent” people being so great, and their notions of moral right and wrong being so rude, a valuable purpose may be served by the Establishment, as it now exists; a rich, learned, venerable, fortified corporation.

That the Church has really answered a most useful purpose in preserving a sound, wholesome type of character in England, I am very deeply convinced. I can and do, in retrospect, sympathise heartily, tenderly, and reverentially with the Simeonite or Evangelical reaction. Not a stone would I dare to throw at the names of any of the good men who took part in it. But, at the same time, I know perfectly well that there is a type of character which never did, never will perhaps, understand Evangelicalism, but which is capable of religious faith acceptable to God, though innocent of Shibboleths; and a type which could have found no shelter during (which I dare to call) the *Sturm-und-drang* season of the Simeonite reaction, except in the

bosom of the English Church. I have in my eye such people as the old bachelor Quinee of Praed's exquisite verses ; the vicar, Dr Poundtext, who was so fond of Quince, and would never have thought of telling him he had not been “born again,”—

“ He went to church but once a week ;
Yet Dr Poundtext always found him
An honest man, who studied Greek,
And liked to have his friends around him ;”

or again, the Mr Gilfil of George Eliot ; or the excellent old uncle of “Adam Bede,” so beautifully sketched by the same author. I might mention in the same category, Bishop Butler—a saintly man ; a man who might excusably be canonised ; yet a man who, both in his creed* and in his life, would have been very unsavoury to the Simeonite party, and would have been morally mobbed to death by them, if they could have got at him.

However, it is not my intention to go at length into this subject, which only arose by the way. It was of the Church Absolute that I wished to speak, and of its

* That “Evangelical” preachers and writers make theological capital out of Butler is another thing. They are simply dishonest, or mistaken in doing so.

function as complementary to that of the State, or Civil Government, representing the Sphere of Love, while the other represents the Sphere of Law, or Force.

I CANNOT, by any process whatever, bring myself to recognise the function of Government as moral. It must deal with actions either as *wrong*, or as *injury*. If it deals with them as wrong, it cannot possibly stop short of persecution. All the difficulties arise which I have suggested in a letter to Mr John Stuart Mill. The Best is, for ever, in a minority of one,—necessarily so, by the law of progress. Now a government, considered as moral, can never be anything but the expressed will of the majority. Even Mr Carlyle's despotism of the Wisest must be a representative government—implicitly or explicitly, your Wisest must be chosen ; as he may be deposed for a Wiser. What, upon any constitutional hypothesis, I am to understand by the *morale*, or moral choice of a cabinet, I do not know. This must be again a question of majority I suppose; for Mr Lowe may think one thing, Mr Gladstone another, and Lord Palmerston a third. But what *right* have a majority to govern a minority ? A minority may indeed say, explicitly or implicitly, “ We will sacrifice our *convenience* or our *pleasure* in such and such particulars to that of

the greater number—taking our chance of ourselves being some day a majority, and making you do the like.” That is intelligible. So is any other view of a compromise of rights (to pleasure or convenience) dictated by divine expediency. But the moment it is understood that, upon any principle whatever, any external Force may interfere with my conduct considered as moral,—*i e.*, as related to my own conscience,—that moment sets in the possibility of persecution. It is unnecessary, as well as useless, to elaborate this again, as I have done in addressing Mr Mill; and it is certainly unnecessary, in addressing you, to insist that the vulgar distinction between duty to God and duty to man is not logically tenable. There is not an act possible to human choice which may not have religious sanctions behind it, and therefore not an act upon which the question of persecution may not arise, if government be allowed to have any concern with conduct considered as right or wrong. I will not plague you by pushing any further what must be mere commonplace to you; but will simply say that I hold government to be absolutely and necessarily *unmoral*; a mere policeman to put down inconvenience; an automaton set up by common consent to do for every man what he is entitled to do for himself—namely, *resist*

aggression; the symbol of the prime axiom of the thing called Justice—namely, every man may do what he chooses, so long as he hinders not any other man doing what *he* chooses. Government is, in my eyes, a mere machine for helping to maintain the equilibrium of personal freedom. Of course, in an ideal community, there would be no government at all, for there would be no injurious force against which repressive force had to be exercised.

I need not repeat what I have said about divine expediency. For instance, I hold that it is no part of the duty of a government to relieve the poor; but yet I am not sure that I would, if I could, abolish the poor-law. The burden of proof however lies, in my opinion, with those who justify a poor-law; as the burden of proof rests with the advocates of any and every restriction or compulsion, of whatever nature or kind, or for whatever purpose proposed.

Denying, as I do, that the function of Government by force (which is civil government) is Moral, I do not, you will have guessed, deny, but strenuously maintain, that the conscience—that which is Moral—tends to set up an organised external symbol of government

from Above ; and that symbol I call the Church Absolute. Let me approach, by degrees, the definition of what I believe to be the function of the Church ; merely premising that I am *not* about to suggest a limitation, but, on the contrary, an extension of the commonly-received view of its scope.

To return, for a moment, to the sphere of external force.

The involuntary functions necessary for the continuance of life are, to begin with, beyond the sphere of government. Government has no business to interfere, if it *could* interfere, with the colour of my hair, or my digestion of my food.

Again, it has no right to interfere with my use of the means of life in my intercourse with others, unless I do what they are unwilling I should do—*i.e.*, injure them, cheat, or steal. In other words, Freedom of Trade is what no government is entitled to deny to the community. In point of fact, and in practice, it can only *try* to do so ; for trade restrictions are sure to be evaded. Here of course, as elsewhere, considerations of divine expediency must have a place. In a barricaded city, a police-captain may lawfully, perhaps, prevent my going about my usual business ; just as, when there is a stoppage in the street, a policeman may

force me to take an exceptional *route*. But all this is only right upon the supposition that the principle of freedom is recognised, and that the exception is, on both sides, understood to be one.

Again, the sphere of the emotions, and of all conduct expressing emotion, unless it interfere with the freedom of others, must be outside the pale of civil compulsion. Government could not, if it would, compel me to admire a picture of Turner's. If I happen to admire it, I may do what I please by way of indulging my admiration, so long as I am only just. I may buy the picture, if I can ; only I must not steal it. Government could not compel me to love John or Thomas ; it could not prevent my loving John or Thomas ; nor has it any right to interfere with my expressing my love, or want of love, so long as I limit the freedom of no other person. Government cannot make me devout ; it cannot prevent my being devout ; it has no right to prevent my cultivating the devout life in any way I please, so long as I do not, by my act, prevent others.

If, for a temporary reason, government have the right—the right of a divine expediency—to interfere with the way in which (suppose) I express my devotional feelings, two things must be borne in mind as

conditions of the right. First, that the right to interfere at all is only casual; for a government which denies freedom denies its own formal *ratio*; and secondly, that it can never claim anything more than the validity of a negative. For example, in time of war or public trouble and confusion, it is conceivable that the civil officer may have the right to say to me, "You shall not go, on Sunday morning, to your accustomed place of worship;" but it is *not* conceivable that he should have the right to say, "You shall go and pretend to worship at another place." Again, it is also conceivable that a private individual might be justified in resisting the civil officer in the first case; might feel himself entitled to say to the civil officer, "God calls me, and I *shall* go." In such a case, nothing remains possible but conflict, and sacrifice on one side, or both. The man might be right before God in resisting the civil power. The civil power might be right before God in putting him to pain.

Let us take another case. Let us pass from devotion to friendship. I have as much right to love the man Thomas, and seek his society, as I have to hang up a picture on my wall because it pleases me to do so. If Thomas is willing, he and I may enter into any relations of friendship that we please, so long as we do

not limit the freedom of others to do similarly. Now, suppose Thomas and I take a room upon joint responsibility, and agree to spend three hours a day together, cultivating our friendship in that room,—reading, talking, doing whatever we please. Suppose, again, that, after a twelvemonth, Thomas is minded to quit my society. Thomas may be ever so wrong in his reasons, (if any;) but external compulsion cannot make one man feel friendly towards another. One thing, however, it can do: it can enforce tangible obligations. So government could make Thomas pay his share of the rent of the room for as long as our engagement lasted. But it would be ridiculous and wrong for the civil officer to meddle with the question of privilege. For I need not be hurt by the retirement of Thomas unless *I like*. He may be wrong in retiring; but he may not. Perhaps I gave him reason. Perhaps I gave him reason in a way no court of justice could possibly take account of. Suppose I came, suddenly and unaccountably, to hate Thomas, and gave him a momentary look of concentrated detestation which made friendly intercourse impossible. Suppose a thousand million things, —none of them, perhaps, so extraordinary and so inscrutable as the things which do actually occur day by day, without our knowing or dreaming of them. It is utterly

absurd for the civil officer to walk up with the sword in his hand, and interfere in the question of privilege,—the question of the emotions. I should not be so ridiculous as to go to a court of justice and say, “Please to make Thomas shake hands with me. Please to make Thomas be friendly with me. Please to make Thomas converse. Please to make Thomas smile. Please to make Thomas meet me as usual.” I might, and probably should say, supposing Thomas tried to shirk his obligation, “Please to make Thomas pay his share of the rent.” But I can have no property in emotion, or in conduct expressing emotion; for neither can be enforced. The case would be just as if I had been a painter, and Thomas, admiring my style, had praised and bought my pictures for a long time. It might be very inconvenient and distressing for me, if Thomas suddenly came to think my painting bad, and took to patronising another artist. But the civil officer would have no business to make him go on buying my pictures. That would be unjust to Thomas, and might be injurious to art; and so to others besides him.

Now, I shall be drawing nearer to my main topic, if I remark at once, (and, indeed, the remark is here in its proper place,) that all the emotions, and all conduct

flowing from the emotions, stand upon the same footing, with respect to external compulsion. You would have no right to drive a man, with a penalty over his head, to pretend to admire Turner's pictures. You would have no right to drive him to pretend attachment to Thomas or John. You would have no right to drive him to pretend to worship at your own authorised altar.

The reason is obvious : you violate the Moral Law itself. I have endeavoured, in addressing Mr John Stuart Mill, to show that the formal ratio of all Ethics is Truth ; carrying the analysis of the sentiment of duty down to what I have called the Absolute or Universal Point of Honour. Violate this, and you commit the greatest of crimes ; nay, rather, the only possible crime, for all wrong-doing consists in such violation. Violate this, and you commit the absurdity of denying the *raison d'être* of the very force you use, which is authorised and set up (and should only be put in action) for moral reasons.

The State, then, must not interfere by compulsion (except in so far as it may perhaps claim the validity of an occasional negative, as a matter of expediency) in relation to—

1. The involuntary functions which make life.
2. The pursuit (not unjust) of the *means* of life.

3. The emotions, and external conduct (not unjust) springing from the emotions or involuntary impulses.

But there will now remain three tremendously wide tracts of human life uncared for,—except protectively,—unless some other power may intervene. That power must be one which leaves the will free, for it may not violate the moral law; and yet it must be a power capable of laying the foundations of its activity in some immutable resources of the human mind. Irregularities, crossings, puzzlings, blunders, conflicts, wrongs, not (necessarily) cognisable by the civil power, will occur under each of the above three heads; and so we shall have—

1. Disease, or illness.
2. Poverty.
3. Error, or wrong, short of crime.*

Now all these things have hitherto largely belonged, as to their causes or history, to the sphere of the intermediate, the indefinite, the occult. Science is perpetually endeavouring to reclaim the ground they have thus far appeared to belong to, and to reduce them within the sphere of law, or definite calculability. Let it proceed; palsied be the hand that would stay the

* No reader requires to be told that *crime* is injury, punishable by civil law.

pathologist, the political economist, or the statist, on his path of tentative usefulness ! But, in the meanwhile, the causes of disease, poverty, and moral error are largely to be referred to occult, or incalculable causes. Evils occurring under the three heads in question, may all legitimately be dealt with by the individuals themselves ; but they may be followed by disabling consequences, or the individuals may be anxious to lay down their burden at the feet of —

At the feet of what ? CHARITY; in the sublimest sense in which that word can be used : the fusion of sympathy, reverence, and power.

Now, what is the Church ? What does the Church Absolute represent ? She represents the (Occult, or) Infinite, incarnating itself vicariously in the Finite. She represents,—to use a Dissenting phrase familiar to me in my childhood,—she represents the God-Man-Mediator. Her sphere is just the sphere the civil power cannot touch. She may concern herself with the healing of disease, or the mitigation of its consequences ; with the relief of poverty ; with the cure of moral wrong, short of crime. In other words, her business is with the Sick, the Poor, and the Tempted, or Erring—always, if they come to her—presumably whether they do or not. In the obvious labours of

Charity which fall to her share under the two first heads, she has always at her service, *at least*, the wealth and other means of which she may be made the steward by the free-will of her sons and daughters, who understand the fundamentally vicarious Idea of the Church ; and for the less obvious labours of Charity which relate to the Erring or the Tempted, she has, *at least*, the resource of Discipline, which, in this Realm of the Cross, replaces the idea of Punishment, which belongs to the Realm of the Sword, or Force.

But is this all the Church has ? I suppose there are still people to be found in the world who believe three things about the community of the faithful :—

1. That the Church has, or may have, the power of miracle ;

or, in other words, that the soul which is, in faith, at one with God, may, at His pleasure, be made so far partaker of His life that, by a divine afflux, she may control physical conditions.

2. That the Church has guaranteed to her all that is required for the ends of Charity to the poor ; or, in other words, that what is called the Bank of Faith is a *real* bank, whoever laughs ; that, for example, Müller's House for Orphans may really and

truly be maintained by direct Divine intervention, for what we know or can prove.

3. That the Church has, or may have, the gift of the discerning of spirits, and the loosening and binding of the same.

But never mind what is believed or not believed. Let Science take the admission that these are only symbolic superstitions. The function of the Church, as respects the Sick, the Poor, and the Erring, remains. The sphere of government is that of Self-assertion, of Force, of protection afforded to the individual life moving in right lines outward from itself without regard to the needs of others. But, in a world of limitations, lines cross, and the "rights" of Justice become the "wrongs" of Love. Here, then, is the sphere of the Church, who uplifts the symbol, and tells the story, and teaches the doctrine of Divine Self-sacrifice; the God-Man-Mediator; the doctrine of the inseparable Vicariousness of Life; the moral form of the inexorable Mystery of Things,—of the Many, as contrasted with the One. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."*

* Galatians vi. 2.

That is the formula of the religious life expressed earthwards. And the reason which creates the necessity for the canon is not far off,—“For every man shall bear his own burden.”* No one may break the moral law—every man shall bear his own burden ; but, the law once broken, or the special need once created, the work of self-sacrificing love begins, and the law of Christ must be fulfilled in mutual sympathy and helpfulness. And so, when Evil, instead of overcoming, or being simply opposed with Evil, (for even retributive pain is evil,) is overcome of Good, the moral law is more than fulfilled—it is glorified ; and there is, with good reason, more joy among the angels of God over one repenting sinner than over ninety and nine “*just*” persons that need no repentance.

I quite conceive that those in whom the moral and religious ideas are weak will be ready to say—if any such read these words—that this is a mere “paper constitution.” “Government,” they will say, “we understand ; it means, *Do this*, or *Do this not*, and beware our sword of justice. It means big guns and big battalions. But your Church Absolute is a fig-

* Galatians vi. 5.

ment, without powers, without rights, and, at the best, a thing which our big guns can, at any time, make a clean sweep of."

I answer, that these things are not so. The religious facts which terminate in the setting up of the religious symbol of the Church are absolute and invariable, and, do what you will with your big guns, will work and hold their own. I do not, of course, mean that the religious emotions do not differ in strength, or may not be in abeyance. But assuredly big guns are as powerless against them, on the whole and in the long run, as against (for example) the instinct of sex. A being in whom no latent germ of them—indefinitely small, if you please—existed, would be a simple idiot, incapable of any relations with the life of his fellow-men. Nothing can rid us of the Boundless, the Inscrutable,—the feeling of it arises in even the coarsest mind, while the thunder of the big guns is dying away, and the smoke and the flash commingle. Well, give this feeling but an hour's breathing-time, only so much as the length of the sentry's watch in the midnight, which suspends the noise of your big guns, and it tends to become, at the lowest, superstition or fetishism. And now, when your guns have done their work, tell me, unless you

have swept the earth clear of suffering, because you have swept it clear of human creatures—tell me, I say, have you battered away compassion out of the human heart with your thousand-pounders? If not, you have enough left behind, in the Emotion of the Inscrutable, and the Emotion of Sympathy, linked as they will be by the mesothetic idea (looking both ways) of *Dependence*,—you have enough, I say, out of which to reconstruct Religion, and Religious Institutions. Nor will they tarry long to follow in the wake of Suffering and of Terror. The very means you might, hypothetically, take to destroy them would, of necessity, re-create them out of the old primordial elements. Nor, in fact, do I remember any patron of big guns who has wholly dispensed with the religious ideas as aids. I can scarcely conceive a victim dragged to the scaffold without a priest in the ghastly train; a Grand Custom in Dahomey, without an invocation of the Unknown Powers, and, at least, some such recognition of Mercy as may exist in a ceremonial excuse for dispensing with it.

I know it is out of place to address all this to you. It is only justified because the argument may seem to need it. Briefly, the Church, as an institution, stands upon as safe a footing as Civil Government;

and there is no getting rid of it, without getting rid of everything else,—no hypothesis of life, I mean, which, omitting Religious Symbols, and rallying-points for religious life among men, will not be forced by its own logic to omit other things—which cannot be omitted without more coarse and palpable, though not more real, absurdity.

Indeed, in stating, as between Church and State, the divarication of function which I have been insisting on, I have approached a great, a very great Mystery of Truth. Of this great mystery, my own apprehension is most imperfect, but yet I do *see*, and another may, peradventure, see better the thing towards which I would, in all humility, lift my finger in a few sentences, here to follow.

Although neither reverence nor love can be enforced from without, yet I am quite sure that the individual soul cannot stop at *justice*; but, once realising *that*, in the attitude which it takes, passes inevitably on by the mesoethetic condition of *reverence*, to *love* itself.

Of course I am here using the word *justice* in the large (but strictly true) sense which I have already claimed for it. I am just when I am true; just in so far as I am true; wholly just only when I am wholly

true. I am perfectly just, when standing, myself, upon the Absolute Point of Honour, I recognise the right and duty of my brother at my side, be he high or low, mean or noble, to stand upon his. And can I stop here? Well, I cannot answer for others; but for myself I can answer; and, assuredly, I cannot, *do* not stop here. The cat and the dog, the rat and the snake, have rights too; and powerfully, at times, do they come home to one. Here, then, we may stop? Again, I cannot speak for others; but, speaking for myself, my answer is—No! we must go further. Ridiculous as such a use of language may appear, I must ask if it has never occurred to others besides myself,—in Europe and the West, as it obviously has in the East,—to feel that the (so-called) inanimate world has rights.

If you smile, and tell me I am being led astray by a metaphor, I can only reply that I really am not. What, let it be asked, is at the bottom of the feeling which prompts the all but universal condemnation which awaits wanton destruction or injury of inanimate objects of all kinds? Sometimes it is, undoubtedly, the thought that what is useless to one person may be useful to another; but I am, myself, distinctly conscious of a deeper and wider feeling,—a sense that whatever is has a life of its own which it should be

free to develop, so long as it does not injure the life of other things. It would be useless for me to try to express the intensity of the feeling which has sometimes arrested me, in the act of knocking off a hedge-bough, or cropping a bunch of red ash-berries, (which I did not intend to apply to any use, ornamental or other)—the feeling that the smaller details in the universe were parts of a whole in which I was involved, in every fragment of my being, now and for ever. That I could no more tell my exact relation to the farthest star, or the nearest stock or stone, than to my farthest neighbour or nearest friend ; and that the basis of all the goodness to which I can ever reach, and all the faith I can ever feel, must be,—to all things and to all persons—must be non-interference,—a purely statical attitude.

But when the thread of “justice” is thus, by an all-pervading thought in the inmost *now* of my mind, run through the All, my “non-interference” passes into reverence. In presence of this Magnitude, the *static* attitude becomes *ecstatic* ; and simple Truth turns into Worship and Love. The reason is that Justice, felt in the Absolute Point of Honour, while it is on one side pure self-assertion, is necessarily on the other side pure

self-abnegation, or the denial of so much of myself as would limit another's free activity.

It is at this point that Morals pass into Religion, and the ultimate formulas of both are seen to be identical. To be strictly just even to my worst enemy, in the hour of my most resolved revenge, brings with it more than the word "justice" will cover. It brings with it something of self-abnegation ; and so the extreme of hate touches the very extreme of love.* When, in presence of the Aggregate of things and persons, I experience in its absolute form the sense of justice, and relinquish, in my own soul, all so-called "rights," as against any part of the Aggregate, except that of self-preservation, my mind does not pause there. This renunciation of the "rights" which are "wrongs" transforms itself, in the being, or the "becoming," the *werden*, into a reverence which is also love. Thus the crude $\eta\theta\eta$ has put on religion, and I am sensible that, in its very essence, Life is vicarious, as manifested in

* *The fiercest savage never killed his most hated foe without feeling a passion for him.* Some sense of justification always attends a murder of revenge, enacted upon the level called tragic. The murderer says, "Slay me : it is just; but I did well to slay *him* : that too was just, upon a platform of absolute justice to which your laws do not reach."

the Many—and that the atoning descent of the One, or the Infinite, into the Finite, is an infinite necessity.

Thus the Moral Sense, or Absolute Point of Honour, directed upwards to the All is Love, or Reverence,* or Self-Abnegation ; though directed downwards to the Many, it is Justice, Rights, or Self-Assertion.

To say that the sphere of the State, in which external compulsion may be used, is Justice, and the sphere of the Church, in which external compulsion may not be used, is Religion, or Love, may seem commonplace enough, unless it is remembered that the thing which is signified by the word “justice” is not, in fact, debatable at all ; and further, that there is a very momentous practical conclusion to be drawn ; which is this :—The more the State trespasses upon the province of the Church, the more is conscience deteriorated, and the sphere of compulsion (which is another word for wrong) *artificially* extended. I have, myself, not the shadow of a doubt that in saying this I lay my finger upon the source of the worst evils, short of violence, of our civilisation. It is the business of government—and

* Perfect reverence, or *willing* submission, implies love—mere deference to power is quite another thing, and not religious at all.

its power extends no further, flatter itself as it may—not to see that people do right, but to see that each person is protected in the doing of what he himself thinks right. It is the business of the Church to induce people to do right; to compromise by mutual service and self-denial the consequences of collision of conscience in the sphere of freedom; and to restore by discipline (which is deprivation voluntarily submitted to) the conscience which admits it has done wrong. If any man suggests that the *means* of the Church for *its* ends are less than those of the State for *its* ends, he is, to that extent, an unbeliever in the Divine supremacy. Of all terrible subjects for the thinker in Ethics, none is more terrible than the incessant degradation of conscience by the application of external force to matters upon which it is powerless except for evil. Necessarily if the Civil Power commands, it must command as little as it can possibly do with,—for its commands must be enforceable. And what is the consequence? So long as the Civil Power is supposed to be the guardian of goodness, and not merely of *rights*, the general conscience is depressed to the law-made standard. If anybody says, “Then *raise* the standard,” the answer is that, raise it as you may, the same consequences will ensue. The ultimate grounds of this con-

clusion I have explained elsewhere ; but, obviously, however you alter the level of the enforceable, the same *proportions* will obtain between the Best Conscience and the Statutory Rule. Well, to return : if any man believes that there are no means of filling up the interval, he is, surely to that extent, an unbeliever in goodness. For my part, I do, with all my soul, believe that for that part of our nature which ranks, as to its involuntariness, and its claims to freedom from compulsion, (except, as I have said, in the way of an exceptional *negative*,) with the Religious Sentiment,—for that part of our nature, I say, I believe that Religious control is sufficient, and that it could and would make itself felt as decidedly in that sphere, as the civil power does in its own sphere. If this cannot be maintained, Religious Freedom must go. It has not an inch of ground to stand upon.

Any purely regulative theory of things *excludes* morality and religion. It may nominally found itself upon religious and moral ideas, but it must first steal them ; as it must afterwards deny them. Let the force of any emotion whatever be as 100. I resolve to put it down, or “regulate” it. By the application of external force, I succeed, let us suppose, in reducing it to 60. But if I may and can bring it down to 60, why not to 40 ?

To 20? To 10? To 0 or zero? This is ridiculous, and leaves us nothing but external force to go on with. Thus any extreme which enthrones Law absolutely over the whole of life must end by destroying that which alone can give a motive for law. The solution of the difficulty is found in the Vicarious Force of Love, which says, "Bear ye one another's burdens ; . . . for every man shall bear his own burden."

We have, quite recently, had under all our eyes a case of "compulsion," which is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the purely Regulative Theory of Life in all possible forms, though, indeed, there are only three leading forms of it; that which is taken up quite logically by the Sceptic; that which is taken up quite logically by the Romanist; and that which may be taken up illogically by a Protestant believer of a turn of mind so overbearing that any regulative conception commends itself to his approbation. Without the least desire to revive unnecessarily what would cause pain to any human being, I would venture to refer to the case of the schoolmaster who flogged a boy to death, or at least who administered a flogging under which the boy died. With fearful consistency this man endeavoured to compel a "wife" (*i.e.*, a woman who, under wrong impressions, had permitted herself so to be named) who loathed him

to return to what he called her “duty;” and a barbarian relic of the unnatural alliance of Civil and Canon Law sanctioned his endeavour. The woman called his “wife,” unable to persuade the jury that, by withdrawing her consent, she had ceased to be the thing she was called, (an unwilling wife being, in physics as well as in metaphysics, an absurdity,) evaded or stultified the law,* by escaping out of the country. With, again, perfect consistency, the so-called “husband”—for such a man is, in truth, a mere violator—appeals to the public, to Lord Brougham, to “Heaven,” and things in general,—to help him to do—what? To help him to compel that which can only be done voluntarily.

Now, the curiously instructive part of the whole story is that public *sentiment* is, in both cases, against the violator, and on the side of the victims, both boy and woman. I say public sentiment, because public opinion is self-stultifying upon all such questions. Public opinion supports the law as it is, and it supports the “authority” of schoolmasters and parents. Public sentiment feels that things may be pushed too far, and gets up a tacit wink when it comes to anything awkward.

* All laws which trespass upon another sphere, may be, and are so evaded.

But this is intolerable. The fact is that, upon that regulative theory of things by which the majority of people claim to be guided, the man in question was perfectly right in attempting, with the help of an "attachment," to violate the soul and body of a woman, and perfectly right in flogging the boy to death. I have such confidence in the natural truthfulness of the human mind that I feel satisfied a large number of people had, at the time of the child's death, a feeling that the schoolmaster who battered him to a red-blue jelly was logically justified. How *could* he otherwise be true to his own notions of duty? If I may try to force another to do right, *quoad* right, then I am as much bound to flog a resisting pupil to death as the Roman Church is bound to burn heretics. And she is so bound, by the plainest logic of conscience, if only her first postulate be correct. Well do I remember saying to my seniors when I was a very little boy, "If you flog at all, you should flog more! When a boy resists, you have no right to stop till he gives in, or till you have killed him." And I was perfectly correct. In return I used to get things thrown at my head, or else solemn assurances that when older I should be wiser; but, sir, I never got an *answer*, and I am, at present, no wiser.

I have since learnt that government of the kind which I am condemning is called *paternal* government, and that the adherents of that school are fond of referring to the paternal type as a justification of their scheme. But it never seems to strike them that paternal government may be all wrong too, and that domestic rule, as it exists, contains just the same elements of brutality and love of power as all other government, is as little to be justified, and comes just as entirely within the scope of my criticism. But I, who have just been maintaining the “rights” of cats and dogs, and stocks and stones, am not likely to flinch from asserting that those of children are precisely the same as those of grown people; nor was there ever a time when “education,” as it is called, did not appear to me a great blunder and a great wrong. Of course I can well understand the smile with which some people, if they should be reading me, would at this point talk about Utopia, and demand to know how my Church would propose to deal with a rebellious schoolboy. But the truth is not to be laughed down, and it shall at least try for a hearing.

It is no part of my teaching—as I am at present advised—that the application of the *ultima ratio* in education is always wrong in the training of the young,

any more than in civil government, or in war. Manifestly it is right, or at least right-wrong, in all cases where *rights* are infringed. But it is, as manifestly, wrong when employed as a means of enforcing "goodness." It will, perhaps, not be denied to me that this line is sometimes drawn, in private training. Very unfortunate must have been the experience of that man who has not seen natures which contained so much of the vital force of goodness that they could themselves lure on others to be good. And very conceited must be the father or the teacher who has never had the doubt—"Is it that this child is not good enough to reach up to the line I draw, or is it I that am not good enough to up-lift the child?" However, the question waits,—What can the Church do for an obstinate boy?

My answer is, Nothing, perhaps, as things stand. But whose fault is that? The fault of the brute love of power, which has greedily retained a sway over extraneous things! The fault of a feeble religious life, which has not made incursions from time to time upon the stolen ground which physical control had walled in! Once let it be understood that, when it is a question of involuntary emotion, it is the religious, and not the secular aid which is to be invoked, and the method will follow. Does any one believe that an

obstinate boy would resist a whole school which voluntarily put itself in penitence on account of his attitude ? It may be ; but I do not believe it. Or if so, we are not yet at the end of our resources. But great is the power of soul over soul, and I would not dare, pedantically, to draw lines which the aspirations of a good man should never be supposed at liberty to pass. It has been said that some men are made better by being kicked. I do not know ; but something must depend on who it is that does the kicking. A kick from the late Bishop Mackenzie would probably have gone further than a kick from a hired prize-fighter.

But I think I see uplifted high the brows of other readers besides yourself at the idea of a whole school being in penitence for the fault of one boy. "Why, all the work of the school would be stopped !" My answer is, Very well, what of it ? It is not precisely the most essential thing in the universe that lessons should be learnt out of books ; there are other lessons deserving of some attention and some effort, and in everything there are compensations. Great is the horror, and great, too, is the scorn with which I read of the wholesome influence of a public school in familiarising a boy with the ways of the world in which he

will have to take his part. It would be just as wise to assume the probability of his going to hell, and proceed to season him by letting him down into the society of such human devils as could be found. Why, it is the schools which *make* the world. And the world they make is as bad as it is, partly because the schools are modelled after the pattern of the community of the elders of the young people. So one hears fathers say, "Let him go to school, and get accustomed to the world!" which being interpreted, means, "Let my son go and find out how wicked other people are ; let him get his moral sense blunted ; let him learn to drug his conscience ; let him grow familiar with the brutalities of the average human brute ; and then he will in due time elbow his way through life—as the human brutes do theirs!"

But it was not my intention to wander so far upon the by-track which the case of that wretched schoolmaster opened forth, though it is not an irrelevant one. Let us forget him, and deal with the second of the two problems started by his story, in another type, which presents similar though far worse difficulties. Let us return to the story of Guinevere, with which we opened.

In plain fact, a great many difficult stories *are* dealt with by "churches." In some old-fashioned Dissenting communities a strong hand is kept upon the "private" affairs of the members,—not always, or generally, with good results. One need not quote "Silas Marner." But the truth is, the policy of churches in these cases is an adulterated policy. It is a copy, and a bad one, of the civil policy. It aims, like the civil power, at coercion rather than vicarious aid; and it assumes that the civil treatment of the cases with which it also deals is in principle right. In other words, the civil power, long trespassing upon the sphere of the religious conscience, has vitiated the religious conscience, and depressed it to its own standard; or at least assimilated it to that standard, (whether higher or lower,) so that the Church simply backs up the State, and indorses a clerical curse upon a civil writ of attachment. The notion that the very purest available morality of this country, for example, as fixed by law and custom, is anything like the morality of either the Old or New Testament, is beneath contempt. Yet upon that hypothesis, and *that hypothesis as a final one*, does the professedly religious conscience deal with irregular conduct in people who come within the scope of any

verdicts or sentences it can possibly pass. How often may we hear such a speech as this,—“ You have read your Bible ; from a child you have known the Holy Scriptures : you must be aware this is wrong,”—when the conduct condemned is not, even by clear inference, condemned by any specific rule to be found within the lids of the Bible ! Specific *rule*, I say, for of course all duty lies within the compass of the two great commandments ; and I have shown, in what precedes, that I think that cannot be denied on *any* ground upon which moral questions can be discussed at all.

That the Church, then, should be, as in the Romish Church, a mere ally of the civil power, sometimes playing lion, sometimes jackal,—“ handy-dandy, change places ;” or, as in other cases, a mere clerk to say Amen ! to what the civil judge says, and make matters rather worse than better, is not to be endured. I am of opinion that, matters being as they are, churches of all kinds had better, *as corporate bodies*, narrow, rather than widen their spheres of action upon private life. What we require is that the divarication of function should be well understood and recognised ; that the Church should throw its weight into the scale when the civil power has left it empty ; but not until then. The contrary is the most loathsome tyranny of which the

world has thus far had any experience; though, as things befell, and taking the story of Guinevere as Mr Tennyson has told it, the Church of the Cross may be said to have done a noble and useful work. I return to the idea of Sanctuary from which we started. A sanctuary for robbers and murderers,—for any people who have violated *rights*,—such a sanctuary, if final, must be an abomination; as it is certainly a wrong done to the civil power, which has jurisdiction of compulsion over rights. But a sanctuary for Margaret forsaken by Faust, or for Guinevere in her shame, or for Lancelot in his remorse,—a sanctuary where the pain and the wrong are brought out in the play of the involuntary,—that which, though controllable from within, is *not* so from without,—such a sanctuary, I maintain, the Church is bound to constitute itself in the face of the world, as having the sole jurisdiction over such matters. Greater guilt than that of Lancelot and Guinevere—whose whole life was a lie told to one who had not intentionally injured either—it is hard to conceive. But let us suppose they had stopped short of fraud. Let us suppose that Guinevere had said, “I *cannot* love my lord the king; and my soul will perish out of my keeping if I go on in this false life,—this life of pretence and shame, in which he is wronged, though

he knows it not." There are plenty of people who would think that even this would have been wrong ; though there are few from whom the honourable persistence of a woman or a man, otherwise good, in such truthfulness would not at last extract respect, even if it did not suggest doubts. However, let us suppose this. What a case of complicated sorrow and difficulty for all concerned ! For Guinevere, for Lancelot, for Arthur himself !—the latter not blameless, as the tale stands, for love knows nothing of Round Tables, and is not a slave to rub up any man's lamp. What sorrow, I say, is here ! Well, apply external compulsion, and you turn the sorrow into *misery*—*i.e.*, you add degradation to pain. But why *should* you apply external compulsion ? Let the Church declare itself in penitence for these unhappy ones. Let Lancelot, Arthur, and Guinevere be declared in sanctuary ; and, voluntarily submitting themselves to discipline, be set upon courses of action good for sad hearts, choosing their own associates and supervisors, and being upon their honour, until the storm is over and the path is clearer. In what shape the law of duty might make itself manifest in such a case, or in ten thousand others, it is not for me or for any one to decide. But, in the meanwhile, the Church would have at her service the

instruments of persuasion, of condemnation, of excommunication.

But there remains to be said this most important word :—If the divarication of function to which I have referred were recognised, the majority of such cases would probably never occur. Guinevere, for example, might have flown to sanctuary at the beginning, to avoid a position which threatened her peace and her spiritual dignity so horribly as that of an unwilling partner must. “ Marry this man, or go into a convent !” says the model stern father in the old-fashioned romance. It is very cruel and wrong ; but the idea of a religious sanctuary in cases of emotional conflict is right and beautiful, however difficult it may be to suggest it in terms which do not easily lend themselves to ridicule.

A difficulty of which I have been painfully sensible while writing these paragraphs ! Perfectly well do I conceive how one person might say to me, “ Oh, do you want to restore the Confessional ?” and another, “ Ah, would you like to re-introduce the doctrine of the Celibacy of the Clergy ?” and a third, “ Yes, you would like to send an English girl to be flogged by a Lady Superior when she had a difference with her father about her sweetheart.” But to all this I am ready

enough to make answer. I should strenuously set my face against Confession, Clerical Celibacy, (as an institution,) or physical Penance, enforced from without,—supposing such questions to arise. All this kind of thing looks like *seeking* of power; like spreading of nets; like the Church marching up to meet the civil power upon the same line as that on which the civil power is moving down upon that which is obnoxious in society. What I contemplate is, not the increased materialisation, but the increased spiritualisation of the activities of the Church. Still there is no dispensing with symbols, and different classes of minds and circumstances will exact symbols of different kinds. All that is essential is that no symbol chosen, no means used, shall violate the principle; shall fall without the line;—only let it be parallel with the line, and it may—as in truth it must, so long as souls differ—be higher or lower in quality.

If the minds and characters of the people concerned are of a high order, it does not follow that the Sanctuary idea should imply any, the remotest, publicity, whatever may be the nature of the sorrow that is brought to Sanctuary to be laid at the feet of God. Once let the *idea* be influential, and the consent of even natural enemies to lay the cause of quarrel upon the

altar for a time becomes possible. Among Dissenting communities, and even in the Church Establishment, special intercession, the secret of which is unknown to the general congregation, is common enough, though it is often directed to topics which only show how very foolish people are, and how constantly, even under favourable conditions, the religion of the vulgar runs into superstition.

Even this kind of intercession, however, is a coarse thing, compared with what I can conceive; a poor, vulgar way of representing what the Church Absolute might be to her children. I am proposing no set of institutions. Let the civil power take its hands off all that belongs to the free activity of souls, (except that it may, as I have said before, claim, in exceptional cases, the validity of a negative.) The rest will take care of itself. *It* will go to the Church; the Church will advance upon *it*.*

If, once more, any one says that all this talk about the divarication of function of Church and State amounts to no more than that, if people are good enough to be influenced by purely moral or religious reasons, they may be left to their own consciences, and the

* See Appendix.

police disbanded,—I beg leave to say, No ; it comes to a good deal more. What I maintain is that the police will have to be multiplied, and that the growth of conscience will be retarded in proportion as external compulsion is applied in matters of conduct to which it is alien. I assert that any amount of suffering, voluntarily endured, is better than that compulsion *should* be so applied. I assert that suffering, voluntarily and vicariously undertaken, is the divine cure for all evils which arise from conflict of ill-regulated impulse in the sphere of Non-compulsion. I assert that every threat of the law, or of custom or opinion simulating law, aggravates such evils in that sphere, and that the farther the Church Absolute, representing as she does the Religious Ideas, can go in setting up her dominion over it, the better it will be for true goodness and real social order. What is more, the better the people who have to deal with wrong-doing of any kind, the more possible it must become to punish by mere withholding. Goodness is not bare correctness ; it is not bare passivity ;—it is power ; it is something which can make itself wanted, and missed, and longed-for. Surely it is the keenest of all pain to have to control the free-will of another for purposes of punishment. How can I strike without thinking—“ It is my own baseness that

makes this needful ; if I were good enough, I should be able to make others ‘good,’ without triangle and cat-o'-nine-tails. It would then—if I were myself better—be sufficient to refrain, to withhold, to be something less to my fellow-creature. Oh, that I could overcome Evil with Good !”

And, oh, what Utopian talk will this be found ! But, for all that, to overcome Evil with Good is the business of the Church ; and I am content to be “vague” in laying stress upon it. It may be as impracticable absolutely to dissever the moral and the political as absolutely to fuse them ; but incessantly to pursue the task of severance is, I believe, to obey the will of God : though, as far as I have made you out, I believe you would yourself incessantly pursue the task of fusion.

H. H.

TO

THOMAS CARLYLE, Esq.

I HAVE before me, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, your latest contribution to the cause of human welfare;* and, being of opinion that it does you no credit, propose to say so here in terms of which so hard a hitter as you would, I am sure, be the last to complain. You seem to me to have come to the usual end of hard hitters from any and every despotic point of view ; whose fate it is, unhappy men, from the beginning of time until now, to end by, on the one hand, setting up false idols of some brute type, to be worshipped ; and, on the other, stooping to hunt and torture the smallest deer they can find. Roman emperors made ivory temples for horses, and caught flies. You, Mr Carlyle, have set up a shrine for Frederick the Infamous, and taken to persecuting the poor Nigger. Well, I shall take his part. It was difficult, the courtiers used to say, to argue with a rather particular (historic) friend of yours, because he

* See Appendix.

wore such confoundedly thick boots. But this is still a partially free country—in spite of all you have done, following Hobbes, to make it otherwise—and kicking is not always conclusive in the Republic of Letters.

In your “Occasional Discourse” you candidly wrote, “I never thought the rights of negroes worth much discussing in any form, nor the rights of men in any form. The grand point is the *mights* of men,—what portion of their ‘rights’ they have a chance of getting sorted out and realised in this confused world.” In your last book you repeat this in justifying the robber Frederick’s seizure of Silesia :—“Just rights ? What, are rights never so just which you cannot make valid ? The world is full of such. If you have rights, and can assert them into facts, do it ; that is worth doing.” Nobody knows better than you do that this is the doctrine of Hobbes : which I say, not to fasten an ill name upon it, nor because I am blind to the intellectual greatness of Hobbes, but simply that those who care to think things out may be helped to see whither this would lead them. “But Hobbes was a defender of the monarchy, and an enemy of the Commonwealth.” Precisely ! That’s the joke of it ! The argument will go into any hole, round or square. It is good in your mouth for Cromwell, who beheaded Charles. It was

good in Hobbes's mouth for Charles and the Star-Chamber. It was equally good for Cain ; and for Eugene Aram—

“ One blow with ragged stick,
And two with a heavy stone”—

and for the Naples Bourbon, who had to be taught that there was a Voice of Thunder as well as a Cap of Silence ; for the last garrotter ; the last child-stealer ; the Artful Dodger ; and the Tipton Slasher. The world is a jungle. Men are wild beasts. Life is only a scramble. There is natural history, of course ; but morals are impossible.

I know full well that your writings, and especially the earlier, contain the most heroic teaching on the subject of duty which this bewildered generation has yet listened to, and also, that, while disclaiming the consideration of “ Rights ” as the guide of conduct, you have with sublime inconsistency, fought for “ Justice ” with words that are swords. But I know this also, that your writing was always deficient in the way of showing little sense of the self-surrender of love, as distinct from bare obedience—submission to power. I may not here draw out to its results this deficiency ; nor do I make its existence a charge against you.

Heaven expects no man to do more than his appointed work. But, in presence of your wild talk about Might and Right, I call upon you to give back the word Duty. It is a leaf out of another book. You have "conveyed" it. We must ascend a precisely *infinite* distance above the idea of power before we arrive at the idea of Duty. Why, the infant's first rudimentary notion of Duty comes out of *resistance* to power. It can come no other way. Idle as it seems to write such things to a man like you,—or, indeed, to anybody, I must go on. For, sir, you enrage me! Have you considered, not only what you mean, but what you will be *taken* to mean? Have you considered how expert the Devil is at quotation? No, you have not; but I will batter at the fortress of your ambiguity, until I leave *him* without excuse, at all events.

When you speak of Duty, you mean, not nakedly, that the Strongest should prevail, but that the best should be the Strongest. But here we have the idea of Goodness in addition to the idea of Power. And where did it come from? When you look on at a great conflict, it would be absurd to wish that the strongest side should prevail. It *must*. You wish that the side which you think is the *right* side should prevail. Now, turn the adjective into a substantive,

and you have the idea of Rights, which are the *necessary* correlatives of Duties. Do you, I ask, refuse to acknowledge the first? Then you shan't have the other word to sport with. Give it back directly, and take your place in the Infernal Cohort, under the old Black Flag *that we know*. Show your colours, like the great Chieftain you are. Let us know what you mean. It is inconceivable that you should mean that *mere* assertion of rights is of no use: which, indeed, is false unless half the "confessors" that ever died shed their blood in vain. Do you mean that it is of no use trying to "realise" a right, unless you are sure of succeeding? If that be so, Conscience is only a fortune-teller. How can a man know until he tries? How can he estimate the value of a mere protest? The most "sorted out" and "realised" right which now takes the name of a might, was one day only a vague idea. And the conquerors who have planted the flag have had to walk over the dead bodies of the poor forlorn hope that made the first breach.

Indeed, I am well assured that you are at times mindful of this, and of much more, because I observe that you wrote, in 1849, to the Hon. Hickory Buck-skin, a Senator of the Southern States, that he was bound to be fair to the Nigger. Just what one might

say to a wolf over a stolen lamb. But Quashee insists, poor black fool, that other wrongs are trivial compared with the one primary wrong of pretending to own him. If a man sets his foot on my neck, says Channing, it does not mend matters that he wears velvet slippers. And to Buckskin you unhappily added, what you have just said over again in *Macmillan*, a too broad suggestion that the sole difference between slaveholding and not-slaveholding is, that the slaveholder hires the slave for life, while the other hires him only for limited periods; an attempt to reduce the difference between Black Servitude and Black Slavery to a question of time.

A question of time! No, indeed, no; and if it were a son of mine that had cut it so fine, instead of a gray philosopher, I should think it boded ill for his future that he had got so far in casuistry. The difference lies in the question of compulsion or non-compulsion. I can reduce your hiring-for-life notion to an absurdity at once. Other people can play with language as well as you; but I have read somewhere that words are coins or counters, according to the user. Shall our words be coins? Then a man hired for life is a slave, because he cannot change his master for better wages, or for any other reason in which his

soul or body may be concerned. Shall our words be counters? Then, if it were made a condition of the hiring that the man *might* change if he thought he could better himself, the hiring would not be really a hiring for life. Choose your horn, then—counters or coins? Either way you are transfixed.

It is the doctrine of your “Occasional Discourse” that the White Man is entitled to say to the Black Man:—“I am, by the constitution of things, your natural master. It was I who first developed these lands, and their produce is mine. Not a pumpkin shall you have unless you work for it. I shall ‘hire’ you for life, and allow you such ‘rights’ as I think you capable of using profitably.” This is a fair and complete summary of your drift. And the Black Man’s reply, as formalised for him by those who think the business of the strong is to protect the weak rather than to use them, runs as follows:—“By the constitution of things no man is master of another. Supposing it was you who first developed these lands, it is not clear that you had any business to do it;—nor does it follow that you are, therefore, entitled to the produce;—or even that the produce does you any good. As for the right to your pumpkin, the question was not, is not, of my raising. Suppose a strong

cannibal were to kidnap you, the white, and then, when you languished and went to the bad, were to say, ‘Not a nice tender bit of girl’s shoulder shall you have until you work for it;’ and so on, through all your speech to me? No, sir; I don’t care for your cotton or your pumpkin either. Just replace me on my proper soil, with all the adaptations and fitnesses of mind and body which I had before you transplanted me. Until you do that, you are a robber. I resist you to the death, and it is only adding insult to injury to taunt me with being incapable of a greater measure of freedom than you think proper to dole out to me, drop by drop, after you have demoralised me by your own crime. That is the tyrant’s apology all the world over.”

This speech of the Nigger seems to me to have so much reason in it, that we may even bear to hear a little more of it. Shall he go on?—“ You tell me I have not the same rights as you have, because I am not your equal. You talk rubbish! I own I am *not* your equal; and what of it? It is the just right of every one to use all his faculties. I have not so many faculties as you, but I am entitled to use all I have and to tell you to mind your own business, and not encourage your Chelsea friend to write such jargon as

that, a short time ago, every human being had not even a right to be. *Ach mein Lieber!* What thinks Banjotes, with his leash of sidereal bones? He thinks your friend was at first so sharp a thinker that he mowed his own legs off and then took to standing on his head."

You must excuse poor Quashee for misquoting your "Sartor Resartus." He does not know much about "Böotes" and the "zenith;" and he is naturally shy of "hunting-dogs," considering his too-recent relations with the Hon. Hickory Buckskin. The sum of poor Quashee's oration you will find in an "Occasional Discourse" of William Ellery Channing, which has never been answered, and never will be while the earth rolls. It was written with a tenderness towards the South which, to a man like me, looks like pusillanimity. I do not think the law of love is broken in a single word from beginning to end. Unhappily, however, it enraged the Hon. Hickory. I well remember his remark: "Let the little man come down South, and we'll hang him, though he should come with a body-guard of twenty thousand men!" Such were the sentiments of the Hon. Hickory, and they do him—and, obliquely, you—very great honour.

As to my own sentiments, pray do not misappre-

hend them. I am not taking the part of hide-bound idiots against you. Only your backers, the Immutable Veracities themselves, can know how heartily I share your hatred of oppression “ by the whole united company of Tomkinses and Jobsons.” Also dear Sir, your hatred of shams—including the sham of pretending to submit willingly to an abhorred rule. I entirely agree with you that the Best and Wisest should be at the top, and the others underneath ; and it does appear to my mind that poor Quashee hints at the how. Surely, if each person had the free exercise of all his faculties, the Best and Wisest must come to the top ? If not, let us wait patiently until the crack of doom, under Fool’s law, rather than try your recipe. Talk about anarchy, indeed ! That the Best and Wisest should proceed to assert themselves, each according to his might—why, the thing is done to your hand—at the Agapemone.

Permit me to tell you an anecdote. At a Committee of the House of Commons on the South Kensington Museum question, a witness having said he thought photographers should be freely admitted to copy works of art, the following passage-at-arms ensued :—“ Mr Robert Lowe—All photographers ? Witness—No ; only competent men. Mr Lowe—

Have you any idea how many hundreds of ‘competent’ photographers there are in London?” Sir, you enjoy a joke. Let me ask if you have any idea how many thousands of Best and Wisest there are on the face of the globe, from Brother Prince to the King of Dahomey?

I have such absolute confidence in your insight, that I know you will believe me when I say, that I think a world modelled according to your notions would be just such a world as I should myself choose to live in. But I would rather live in the worst possible metropolis than that you should compel this London to be good in your own way. I can guess what that way would be. You would like to ride from Chelsea to the Tower, putting things and people to rights, with a regiment of dragoons at your back to enforce the will of your Best and Wisest. And I wish you may get it.

[When he wrote the foregoing, Mr Holbeach appears to have been too angry with a very great man, to whom I know he was always ready to pay affectionate homage, to guard his thrusts. But that he was quite

aware of the direction in which his letter required guarding is easily seen from the sequel to this letter, which was found among his papers.—ED.]

I did not choose to slacken my *pas de charge* in the little “occasional discourse on the Nigger Question,” which I have just now delivered at you ; but I am not unaware of the criticisms it would probably receive from some of your thick-and-thin admirers. This, then, is what they may be supposed to say to me :—

“These, my dear sir, are wasted words. You are fighting a windmill. When Mr Carlyle declares that our business is not with Rights but with Mights, he means by the latter word Possibility—the things you *can* do. Observe, he does not say Might, he says *Mights*.”

Yes, I do observe, my friend. But (apart even from the leaning which the phraseology has to the side of the strongest,—a leaning which nothing can disguise,) this turn will not serve you. Obviously not. “Mights,” indeed ! Nobody supposes that we can alter the axis of the globe, or scale the skies. Who

dreams of surmounting or destroying impregnable walls of natural circumstance ? But, apart from *them*, setting aside the resistance of nature (if any) to one's getting one's rights,—the only obstacle to my having them all must be a moral one : if A is short of any of his rights, it follows that some other letter of the alphabet has more than his rights, or is acting unjustly towards A. In this state of affairs it is indeed desirable for A to consider his mights, *i.e.*, his capacities, under the circumstances ; or, in other words, it is proper for him to get what he can, by way of getting whatever he is entitled to. It is a purely provisional procedure on his part to consider his Mights, though a highly prudent one.

But now see where you will run your head ! How is A to know where to stop ? Is he to secure *all* he can ? If so, we come back to Hobbes and our wild-beast scramble. If *not*, I demand to know how he is to limit his own Might, considered as capacity, but by somebody else's Right—or, which comes to the same thing, his *own* Right ? We need not go round the ring again. Neither justice on the one hand, nor self-sacrifice on the other, can exist, unless *Rights*, absolute and supreme, are first presumed to be defined. These Rights may never be realisable in their

completeness, may always be an ideal, but they are the masters, not the servants of expediency ; our guides, and not our crutches. Our business is, first of all, to ascertain our Rights ; then to remember our Rights ; then to realise as much as we can of them, and to take very good care that we use every conquest as a stepping-stone to another.

It is, indeed, so totally unnecessary to preach to us that we must be contented with what we can get, that the doctrine has always a smack of suspicion with it. It is invariably heard from the side which carries the big guns and the well-filled wallet, and generally has the best of it. Tell men as long as you please that they are not entitled to make *enjoyment* at the cost of duty, (*i.e.*, at the cost of the *rights* of others,) the end of life,—that is a lesson which can never be over-taught ; but it is worse than useless to tell them they have no right to be happy. I maintain that I *have* a right to be happy, and that no religion or morality is possible to me, except as I can satisfy myself that the Author of my Being sympathises with my assertion of the right. Obvious enough it is, that if I, AB, have no right to be happy, neither has CD, or EF, or YZ,—in other words, there is no *morale* or *γθη* in the universe at all.

I feel no difficulty in laying my finger upon the precise point at which your teaching slides so near to a fatal error. It is here. You have insisted, more than any other ethicist of modern times, upon the duty of *Veracity*. You have been taunted with teaching that by the test of his veracity *only*, every man must stand or fall. You have, in my opinion, taught the truth. Absolute Rightness is perfect conformity to things in their own true nature. The only rightness possible to any given creature, is conformity to things as he sees them to be. Thus, as I have, with very sincere humility, but still with confidence, written to Mr John Stuart Mill,—the only available ethical criterion is this same Veracity. Unless the Maker of all things means happiness as the final issue of all things, the world is an absurdity ; but from this follows the necessity of perfect liberty for each to pursue his own good, as he himself discerns it. The argument I will not repeat here ; but by that discernment every one is bound, at all risks, to live and die. To be true to one's own ideal, or one's own image of the Best, is the only possible definition of Duty. In seeking to be true to that ideal, a man may have to sacrifice himself, and *may* have also to disregard the pleasures (*though never the rights*) of others. Thus, problems of the

most terrible kind may arise in the path of any man who cannot live without being true, and his “veracity,”—the veracity from which, at his peril, he must not swerve,—may have painful consequences to others. An early Christian would have been bound to confess his Lord, although his father and mother, and all his friends, broke their hearts for it: at the lowest, he *might* have been so bound. But now comes in the risk of error. Whatever pain a man may, in the path of veracity, inflict without guilt (though with grief) upon others, there is one thing he may not do:—he must not enforce his will, *quoad* his will. The very moment the smallest *right* of another crosses this line of pursuit, he must postpone the chase of his ideal. In other words, A has no right to decide for others, for B, C, D, how much of their rights must be sacrificed. If he sets up, at the cost of their *Rights*, his own ideal of human Mights, then this specious, and, I insist, dangerous plural, becomes MIGHT as opposed to RIGHT.

Into this very confusion, I contend, you have allowed yourself to lapse in many of your more tense and heroic passages. That which Frederick thinks is right, Frederick is bound, under infinite penalties, to be true to. But, inasmuch as Frederick may be wrong

in his thought, he is not entitled to sacrifice, on the shrine of his ideal, the merest half-born baby of the right of another :—

“ Whate’er is human, to the human being
Do I allow, and, to the vehement
And striving spirit, readily I pardon
The excess of action.”

And allowance must be made, *is* made by all mankind, for cases which lie on the very confines of great principles, and seem fitted to puzzle the casuistry of an angel. But, after all, we must *recognise* principles, and take care that the pursuit of Mights,—the energetic assertion of a Divine Expediency, does not degenerate into mere conscienceless, or reckless Might. The way to make that care effective for its end, can hardly be to pooh-pooh the importance of the only clue we have,—namely, the ascertained, or presumed, *Rights of Others*.

The sin of doing so, I lay at your door, and do believe, in my soul, you have been, without intending it, a corrupter of hesitating conscience, and devil’s advocate, in this regard. I do not see how even an attentive reader can get anything but contradiction and confusion out of the oscillation which is so painfully apparent in your writings upon this simple ques-

tion of Might and Right. For the purposes of this very page, I have done what I never did before,—read your books right through; and while, on the one hand, I find in them passages which might lie side by side (as to their meaning,—of course, they are better) with the fiercest thing I have ever written in criticising you, I find, on the other hand, that the tendency of your mind to what is permanent is constantly betraying you into bursts of sympathy with force that has *anything* to say for itself, whatever injustice the force is guilty of. For example, I find you writing in your “Chartism,” and “Past and Present,” that England is now suffering, in her relations with Ireland, from injustices committed by her centuries ago,—then quoting Sauerteig* in defence of a savage conquest, on the principle that Might and Right are identical in the long-run,—and, lastly, telling the working-man, enslaved by “heavy wet and gin,” and the “dilettante,” and the “unreposing Mammon-worshipper,” that “constables, cat-o’-nine-tails, severest tyranny so called, blows and spurnings,” may be “true liberty” to such people, if they force them into the “best path.”

* The other day I saw Sauerteig quoted, with much gravity, as “a highly respectable German writer,” who had first been introduced to the English public by Mr Carlyle!

I am bold to say that all this jumbled together, as the reader must take it in your books, is mischievous nonsense. That Might, in the long run, approves itself Right, is an utterly barren proposition, unless it be accompanied by an answer to the question, How “long” must the “run” be? That the “wiser” man is bound to whip the less wise into the “best path,” is worse than barren. The absolute inviolability of my own choice, so long as it does not hurt you, is the foundation of all morals; and I have as much right to flog you into the “best path,” as you have to flog me,—that is, no right at all. It is better that a man should go on doing wicked things all his life,—better that his soul should be risked,—better that the stars should fall, and the solid earth crack into bits, than that you should be permitted to step over the crudest right of the worst villain, in order to whip him into the “best path.” Nor *can* you do it if you flog for ever. I may justly flog in self-defence; I may flog in fair retaliation; but I had better go and hang myself, than flog for the purpose of inducing another to do what I am of opinion would be better for himself.

As for that “long run” in which Might comes to be Right, and Cato has to be pleased with what pleases the gods, the question for ever and ever returns, How

long is the “run” to be? The doctrine, “whatever is is right,” is perfectly true, in the sense that the thing that I find existing is the material out of which God wills that I should make duty; in the same sense that if I do wrong, it is no excuse for me that there was some amount of wrong in the state of facts which formed my environment. But, taking it in any other sense, it is too absurd a proposition to waste words about. Since there is very much evil in the world which it is my business to seek to remedy, it would be quite as true to say, Whatever is is wrong. A child that has learnt its catechism may see his way through the sophism. The Celt, says Sauerteig, dispossesses the elk and the wolf; and that is right, for the Celt remains, and so God approves. The Teuton dispossesses the Celt; and that is right, for the Teuton remains, and so God approves. Therefore, in the long run, Might is Right! You might just as well say in the long run, twice four became sixteen. Once more, how long is the run? Briefly, it is nothing less than all eternity; and, however Divine Goodness may exercise itself in making the results of injustice tolerable, the Celt who was cruel to the wolf, (if he was cruel,) and the Teuton who was unjust to the Celt, (as he certainly was,) will

yet discover that he has a little score to settle with that Right which is *not* Might.

I will here venture on a parable. There was once a highly energetic man—one of your “strong” men, in fact—who was filled with the desire to benefit his townsmen by setting up a bank. He had not money enough to begin with; so he robbed an “unreposing mammon-worshipper” of his bags, and started a bank—which proved a very useful institution. Moreover, he read the miser a lecture on avarice, and gave him a severe thrashing: coupled with an assurance that charity was the “best path.” The bank flourishes to this day, and has served most beneficent ends. But I should be glad to know your opinion of the man who stole the miser’s money-bags.

To return, for a moment, to your Best-and-Wisest theory. A man’s being recognised as better and wiser than others, cannot give him any right over them upon which a scheme of society can be founded. The real state of the case is very simple. A man may play Best-and-Wisest to others, and rule them in that capacity, from motives of benevolence, at their request, or with their consent; but upon the assumption that rights are equal, and that his procedure is provisional.

A parent may *justly* play best-and-wisest to a child, because he has voluntarily brought the child into being, and incurred that precise responsibility. A conqueror who has invaded a country of inferior beings, may be bound, as a matter of divine expediency, to play best-and-wisest for a while among those whom he has wronged, but only *because* he has wronged them, and by way of atonement,—and still upon the assumption of equal rights. The same remark may apply to the case of the slave-owner; with the same proviso of equal rights presupposed. But a theory of society must found itself, ultimately, upon hard, bare justice; for government means force, applied to prevent *injustice*. Now, no man is *bound*, *as towards any other man*,—no man is compellable, in *justice*,—to do any other man good. In other words, no man can fairly, equitably, play best-and-wisest to any other man, against that other's consent. I should be an infamous wretch if I refused to give a starving man a loaf of bread, or to lead a blind man across a street,—I might be infamous for not volunteering such aid,—but no man could justly punish me, by the application of force, for any neglect of that kind. Now, the sphere of external law is the sphere of compulsion, or bare justice, or protectable rights; and when you in-

voke a despotism of the best-and-wisest, you trespass upon the sphere of good-will, whose office is to *supplement defect*. In other words, you fuse Church and State in an impossible ideal. Upon the divarication of function as between these two powers, I have said something, of what has occurred to me, in my letters to Mr Mill and Mr Maurice,—especially in the latter, though the two should be read in connexion. But in the meanwhile, I should be glad if I could see any consistency in your incessant repudiation of the Utilitarian or Benthamist theory. I do not myself advocate it;* but it seems to me that *you* do—without intending it. Your scheme is that of a despotism of the Best and Wisest. Your Autocrat may inflict as much pain as he thinks good for the less wise; by way of teaching or discipline, of course. I should really be glad to know what this amounts to but the principle of the Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number, the right of apportioning pleasure and pain to be in the hands of the Best and Wisest? Whatever his motive of action may be, his policy must be Utilitarianism, pure and simple.

H. H.

* But I do not oppose it; and on most practical questions I find myself at one with Benthamists.

TO THE

REV. HENRY LONGUEVILLE MANSEL, B.D.

I HAVE before me your Bampton Lectures, (for 1858,) entitled, "The Limits of Religious Thought Examined," (Fourth Edition;) and, without knowing whether these words will ever reach your eyes or not, I propose to myself to put down in the form of a letter what strikes me about the book. The transparent clearness of your method, the diligence with which you have consulted thinkers of another school, and your unshaken courtesy to opponents, can well dispense with any acknowledgment of mine. But I ought to say that I have not read *any* of the criticisms, whether of Mr Maurice or of other people, to which you refer in your fourth edition, and am simply about to put down what occurs to *me* personally upon reading your Lectures.

With much emphasis you avow your "deep-rooted and increasing conviction that sound religious philo-

sophy will flourish or fade within the walls of Oxford University, according as she perseveres or neglects to study the works and cultivate the spirit of her great son and teacher, Bishop Butler."

The first observation I think it wise to make upon this is one that has no bearing that I know of upon your own attitude as a religious thinker; but it is one which ought to be as public as possible. A great act of dishonesty is committed when Bishop Butler is quoted in support of the theology which is called "evangelical." By no possible process can the "Analogy" be yoked to *that* scheme; and I recollect Chalmers complains, and truly, that Butler was wanting in the "*sal evangelicum*." He decidedly is; but, what Chalmers was bound to do, before making that complaint, was, to show how Butler (having expressly admitted that "internal improbabilities weaken external proof") could make out his "Analogy" with "the known course of nature," if he introduced the *sal evangelicum* into his exhibition of Christianity.

I need scarcely add, as a matter of fact, that Bishop Butler, when published, as he often is, by "evangelical" establishments, (for example, the Religious Tract Society,) is, like Paley, always *edited*; so that, with such establishments, the Sermons upon Human

Nature are in very little favour. I have been repeatedly informed, by those who were entitled to speak with authority, that at the great fountain-heads of “evangelical” literature, Butler is not considered “safe.”

Of course, the reasons are obvious. To say nothing of the extreme caution of his language upon the subject of future punishment, he expressly denies that the Bible contains *any* theory of the atonement; and, indeed, treats with characteristic contempt the pretence that it does. To this may be added the fact that he expressly, and indeed very energetically, repudiates the notion that “none can have the benefit of the general redemption but such as have the advantage of being made acquainted with it in the present life.”*

Bishop Butler’s own summary of what he undertakes to prove as not inconsistent with the known course

* Analogy, part ii. chap. v. See also, for an admission, by a “Calvinist,” which is systematically ignored, Cowper’s “Truth”—the passage beginning,

“Is virtue, then, unless of Christian growth,
Mere fallacy?” &c.

To this I may add, in passing, that Coleridge’s epitaph upon himself discloses the fact that he did not believe the fate of individuals was decided *at death*, and approved of prayers for the departed. *Vide* Appendix.

of nature, (and to which, he says, at the lowest, a “serious apprehension” of its truth must arise in the mind of an honest inquirer,) is to be found in the last paragraph of his “Introduction.” There it stands, for all men to read ; and, when a little criticism has been expended upon such words as “miracle,” “ruin,” and “apostasy,” as used by him,—I say a little, meaning not more than is now, with apparently universal consent, applied to his argument for Immortality, (“Analogy,” part i. chap. i.)—when that has been done, the residuum is not a whit in excess of the creed of the Extreme Left of the Unitarian school. I draw no inference. I simply state the fact as it is, and warn off dishonest traders upon the greatness of the Bishop’s name ; the greatness of *your* name affording me an opportunity of doing so with publicity.*

Even supposing it understood, however, that the argument of the “Analogy” is pushed beyond its writer’s intent, when it is forced into alliance with schemes of doctrine which he does *not* undertake to stand guard over, ever so obliquely, it remains to be considered whether the observation of Origen, to which

* See Appendix.

Butler attributes “singular sagacity,” be not in fact a very insagacious fallacy. “Origen has, with singular sagacity, observed, that ‘he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from Him who is the Author of nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it as are found in the constitution of nature.’” To this it might be answered that, on the contrary, a *revelation* from the Author of nature might well be expected (if those words are to be retained) to clear up some of the difficulties of the “constitution of nature,” or at least not to repeat them with aggravations.

Again, before passing to your book, I must make another remark about the “Analogy”—a remark which will, I doubt not, reappear in different shapes throughout what follows. It is this. The Bishop lays great stress—*inconsequent* stress, as I think—upon the constitution of things, considered in moral and religious lights, as a *fact* foreclosing discussion. “In vain do you discuss all this,” says he, in effect; “wholly in vain. The order of things is so and so, and no hypothesis you please to frame can shut you up safe from the consequences which *do* attend upon this established order.” Now, in the last chapter,

(chap. viii. part ii.,) Bishop Butler calls attention to the fact that he has constantly been arguing “upon the principles of others,” or proving things in spite of these principles. “Thus,” says he, “I have argued upon the principles of the Fatalists, which I do not believe ; and have omitted a thing of the utmost importance, which I do believe,—*the moral fitness and unfitness of actions prior to ALL WILL whatever; which I apprehend as certainly to determine the Divine conduct* as speculative truth and falsehood necessarily determine the Divine judgment.” Very well. All that I have to say is, that whatever “facts” may prove to be established, as the order of things, upon any other basis than that just laid down, they have nothing moral in them at all, much less religious. It is philosophically conceivable,—I will put the case as reverently as I can,—that this small fragment of the universe, our earth, may for the present be misconducted, misgoverned. The *mere* existence of a certain scheme of “facts” proves nothing for trust and worship. Nothing can be more legitimate than the Bishop’s argument, considered as political, and political only : “ You gain nothing by rejecting this alleged Divine economy, for the result will still be the same.” That is fair enough. *But I charge upon an enormous majority of those who*

think they reproduce him or are sheltered by him, the blunder of applying to the higher hypothesis (of morals and faith) that which he only applies to the lower.

It is now possible for me to draw closer to your book, and, believe me, I do so with an almost overwhelming sense of the manner in which you have fortified your position.

Already I have quoted the words in which you express your profound sense of the rightness and value of the “spirit” and “works” of Bishop Butler. I open the “Analogy,” and one of the first things to catch my eye is the following passage:—“*Our whole nature*”—the entire constitution of us human beings—“our whole nature leads us to ascribe *all moral perfection* to God;” and, lest any one should fancy that only a negation was meant, and not a positive or absolute idea—“and to deny all imperfection of Him. And this will for ever be a practical proof of His moral character, to such as will consider what a practical proof is, because IT IS THE VOICE OF GOD SPEAKING IN US.” Human language may safely be defied to put in plainer terms the doctrine that the moral consciousness is impersonal and absolute, until differentiated in reflection. “And FROM HENCE we conclude

that virtue must be the happiness and vice the misery of every creature ; and that regularity, and order, and *right cannot but finally prevail in a universe under His government.*"

I do not insist here upon the implications of the last few words, nor inquire how they bear upon such a doctrine as that of Everlasting Punishment, (to which I am not sure from your book that you stand committed,) but I do think the whole paragraph at variance with something which I find in *your* eighth Lecture : "The primary and proper employment of man's moral sense, as of his other faculties, is not speculative, but regulative." Here I observe, that its primary function is perceptive, emotive—an absolute perception being followed by a feeling of absolute obligation. "It is not," you say, "designed to tell us what are the absolute and immutable principles of Right as existing in the eternal nature of God; but to discern those relative and temporary manifestations of them which are necessary for human training in this present life." Upon this, I remark, that there are no "absolute . . . principles of Right in the . . . nature of God." Absolute goodness is homogeneous and indiscrepable. All the efforts of human goodness are an incessant struggle to realise the same homogeneity—the fact of the Absolute Good-

ness being given in consciousness. You proceed :—
“ We can only partially judge of the moral government of God, on the assumption that there is an analogy between the divine nature and the human; and in proportion as the analogy recedes from perfect likeness, the decisions of the human reason become more and more doubtful.” Here I remark, that in any respect in which the Infinite transcends analogy, all possibility of judgment fails, and no proposition conveys *any* meaning. But in so far as the Infinite is moral, the analogy is, proportion being kept, quite perfect, or else it is nothing. To talk, for example, of a Goodness to which I can see no analogy, is drawing a circle in the air—it defines nothing, and cannot be an object of thought. And in proportion as the analogy, if any, recedes from perfect likeness, the existence of the thing itself becomes doubtful, from my total incapacity to appreciate evidence that can apply, either way, *only* to a segment of a circle in the air.

However, you go on thus :—“ The primary and direct inquiry, which human reason is entitled to make, concerning a professed revelation, is, How far does it tend to promote or to hinder the moral discipline of man?”

I must avow that at a passage like this I stand

aghast. What is it but the circular sophism of Romanism? Or, which is the same thing, of Scepticism? The very words, "moral discipline of man," are words as destitute of meaning, as of *ratio* or justification, unless you previously posit something which contradicts your proposition. "Promote or hinder the moral discipline of man," indeed! Fine words—fine words: but *why should man care for moral discipline?* On the showing of your book, there is no answer to that question. An answer there *is*, I know, in the Absolute Ideal Goodness, which is given in human consciousness, which does, in fact, control the world, and claims for its indispensable Other-side an Infinite Person—its logical concomitant, though presented *chronologically* in subsequent order to the human mind. "Moral discipline," without this, is a mere scheme of rules, in which the end justifies the means. The point in which the Sceptic and the Romanist meet, *must* meet!—the point at which they do always meet, to obstruct the world in company! Both of them cynical, by the nature of the case—both of them believers in power, and in nothing else! Their whole scheme of the world a Despotism, with Convenience for a god! The Romanist says,—"*Le plus sûr est de croire*—flog down, starve down your doubts!" The Sceptic says,—

“ Nothing is certain ; but it would be uncomfortable to eat each other, so let us make rules of protection, call them Morality, and guard them with whips and cannon ! ” Of course, if the end can justify the theory, it can justify the means.

I contend that your proper place is either alongside of a Sceptic like Hume, or a Romanist like Dr Newman. And, as to both alternatives, you yourself help out the argument which places the dilemma.

First of all, as to the Sceptic. In the preface to your Fourth Edition, you say :—“ I hold that . . . confidence in the veracity of our faculties is a matter of faith rather than of reason ; that it is not a self-evident axiom, for its contradiction is at least conceivable ; and that it is not capable of proof, as we have no means of comparing things as they appear to our faculties with things as they are given in any other relation.” That all this only comes to *zero*, I will endeavour to show in a subsequent paragraph ; but in the meanwhile allow me to place at the side of it the following from David Hume, (Essay I. “ Of the Different Species of Philosophy : ”) —“ That faculty by which we discern Truth and Falsehood, and that by which we perceive Vice and Virtue, had long been confounded with each other, and all

Morality was supposed to be built on eternal and immutable relations, which, to every intelligent mind, were as invariable as any proposition concerning quantity or number. But a late philosopher* has taught us by the most convincing arguments, that Morality is nothing in the abstract nature of things, but is entirely relative to the sentiment or mental taste of each particular being”—and so on. I have quoted enough.

What on earth you can mean to convey (that is worth conveying) when you say you hold that “*confidence* in the veracity of our faculties is matter of *faith* rather than of reason,” is beyond my guessing. If the elephant rest on the tortoise, what does the tortoise rest upon? Inasmuch as all reasoning is subsequent to perception, it is impossible to go *behind* perception to prove that the thing is perceived. You might as well try to lock a door from without, and leave the key inside, so that nobody could get at it. All I can make out of this “confidence,” (or faith—*fides, confido!*) being “a matter of faith,” is a reassertion of the old philosophical quibble, that we can only know phenomena—never *noumena*: things “as

* Hume meant Hutcheson, but he misunderstood him. Hutcheson's *real* place is at the side of Richard Price, as Samuel Clarke's is at the side of Wollaston.

they are in themselves," being beyond the reach of our faculties.

My comment upon this is, that the relation of the thing perceived to the percipient is invariable and absolute. No change or addition of faculty can make any difference, (upon which more hereafter.) Elephant,—tortoise,—and what next? If the *noumenon* is underneath the *phenomenon*, what underlies the *noumenon*? The *noumenon* could only stand related to increased faculty as the *phenomenon* now stands related to present faculty. "Oh, but the faculty and the *noumenon* would both be absolute." Very good,—then it follows, inexorably, that, upon the actual plane, my present perception is absolute, the object at present perceived is absolute,—and all this talk about *noumena* and *phenomena* is mere logomachy: and I maintain it is.

"The assertion which," you say, "has been a stumbling-block to so many critics," the assertion, namely, that "our conception of God under these [the only possible] conditions of thought is *regulative*, but not *speculative*," does not present itself to my mind as a stumbling-block, but as a mere shifting of a difficulty. That difficulty, which you flatter yourself you have got

rid of by trundling off the platform the idea of the Absolute or the One, recoils upon you as soon as your "regulative" conception is applied to the Many. You break the mirror to find the same phantasm in every fragment. God is good, and demands your obedience. Be it so. This is what Mr Isaac Taylor, whose truly profound book you quote, calls "conveying the first truth of theology in terms of the moral system." But do you fancy you have escaped this sphinx of the Absolute? Indeed, no: on every path the riddle waits ravaging to devour you. "Thou shalt do no murder." Be it so: behind this injunction lies all the authority of your "regulative" conception. But do you not know—yes, you know very well—that I can proceed to drive you round the world, for ever, and for ever, and for ever, upon the question of definition? What is the value of your "regulative" conception, if I bring it face to face with the "Absolute," by demanding to know what *is* murder? I can make the demand, and can defy you, to all eternity, to answer it. In other words, your "regulative" conception *must* have a "speculative" justification somewhere or other. You *must* pay this toll before you can move an inch on your way. Refuse me tribute at one gate, and I put up a side-bar to catch you. Or, again, you are in

a charmed circle. Get out of it you never can. Jump over it you may; and I contend you do. But where are you then? Without the limits within which religion is possible at all. And I will not accompany you.

Let me venture to urge upon you that you have accomplished nothing,—no, not so much as “in the estimation of a hair,”—nothing, I mean, towards a *religion*,—when you have made out, ever so successfully, a great being, of a certain degree of goodness, and of a certain degree of power, with respect to whom you and I stand in the relation of governed to (apparent) governor. Set up, on the ground of “probability,” such a being,—strong, good-natured, “regulative,” but under painful necessities of acting in given ways that seem to me unjust,—and you have only offered me an idol. Take it away! This is not God. I may have to submit now—but your idol will have to submit in the end, to submit to God himself.

Of course, no conceivable amount of external evidence—no “miracle,” for instance—would make any difference. It might prove that this being had power to crush me; it might even bewilder my imagination, and shock, even to destruction, my faith,—but still the

case would be unaltered. You would only have got a being of a given *morale*, with an enormous amount of power. Such a being may *appear* to rule the universe for a million ages; but the real God—the only Being whom I can worship—is behind him, or rather above him. My hope, if I am to have one at all, must still be within the veil.

I must deny you the use of the vantage-ground which so many writers have given you with respect to moral criticism applied to the acts, real or supposed, of any such idol. I am not going to forget what I have just this moment said about ethical definition. In other words, I am not going to assert, with pages xv. and xvi. of your preface to the fourth edition, open before me, that “the same * act can never vary in its character according to motive or circumstances.” Of course it can. That is, in detail, precisely the difficulty which you thought to get rid of in the lump—every moral standard, or test, is of infinitely (indefinitely) fluctuating *applicability*. No doubt. But that moral truth is, in this respect, distinguished from any other truth, I deny. I maintain, consequently, that the same tests

* Of course, this is language of accommodation, which you, like the rest of us, are sometimes compelled to employ. The *same* act cannot vary.

are applicable to all actual or possible beings, and that the *method* of application must be always the same.

I can conceive of it as possible that a command from God might change the “character” of some act forbidden by the law of the land in which I live, and, *pro tanto*, “wrong.” But what is the practical value of this admission, I do not know; for I cannot conceive any amount of external or internal evidence, produced by a law-breaker alleging divine command, which would excuse a magistrate from punishing the culprit, or confining him in a madhouse. Indeed, the mere putting of the case carries the mind off to Thuggee at once. If one man may plead a divine voice for a crime, so may every man—which is absurd. Thus, if the possibility of special divine authority to do a (nominally) wrong thing be allowed, the interference, of whatever nature, which visibly sanctions the act should be balanced, one would dare to say, by an additional interference visibly depriving the act of the rank of a precedent.

I have never troubled myself about the case of Abraham and his son, as affecting the morality of the Old Testament; because, in primitive times the father had the right of life and death over the child, and all that was tested in the history, or parable, was the *love*

of Abraham towards God—besides that the sacrifice was never intended to be consummated. But I confess, or rather boldly avow, that I do not agree with Butler when he says that “men have no right to either life or property but what arises solely from the grant of God,”—nor can I reconcile that passage of the “Analogy” with that other—“I have [there] omitted a thing of the utmost importance, which I [do] believe,—the moral fitness and unfitness of actions, prior to all will whatever; which I apprehend certainly to determine the Divine conduct.” It is quite obvious, as a matter of fact, that men cannot exist without the Divine concurrence in the conditions of existence. But there may, nay, there *must*, be a “moral fitness” in the existence of whatever God causes to exist; and, besides, whatever does exist stands in the same moral relation to the infinite as it does to the finite. What right, asks Mr Carlyle, had you, a short time ago, even to *be*? And I answer, None that I know of. But, first, there was a moral necessity that I *should* “*be*,” or else I am a mistake; and, secondly, now that I find myself existing, my “rights” are on as firm a footing as if I were an archangel. Magnitude has nothing to do with justice. If I were greater than all angels and archangels added up together, my “rights”

would be no more. Neither, I being what I am, are they less. In other words, as Butler says,—though inconsequently,—moral fitness is “prior to *all will whatever.*”

When once *religion* begins, then it may most truly be said, that all question of “rights” is at an end,—rights, whether of the infinite as against the finite, or of the finite as against the infinite. For religion is *love*, is the surrender of self. I do not, of course, expect a Christian divine to deny that, from above, “rights” are surrendered in religion; but, from below, this surrender can never take place to a being apprehended as unjust, or as inferior to some of his creatures in goodwill.

If you reply to this,—as in substance you do,—that our ignorance of the Infinite makes it impossible for us to decide upon every question of justice or goodness in the relations of God to man, I agree. Say, that I love my friend. Say, that he does something which is equivocal. Say, that he dies leaving it unexplained. I may continue to love him, and believe in his goodness, because my knowledge of him may justify me in saying to myself that “all would be well, if I only *knew.*” So far is clear. But yet, there are things possible to be done by my friend, or intentions

possible to be announced by him, which *must* destroy my faith in his goodness. The only question is, Did he do such things? or, Did he announce his intention of doing such things?

Here let me observe that the argument from analogy might be put to strange uses in such a case, without misleading me. "Your friend, while he was in India, roasted a poor *ryot* over a slow fire till he died, in order to make him pay his tax." Naturally, I answer, "My friend was both kind and just, and I refuse to believe it." Then my informant replies,—"Oh, but you must look at analogy,—don't you remember he boxed a boy's ear once when the boy didn't appear to deserve it?" But this grotesque perversion of the logic of analogy fails to convince me of my friend's guilt, does it not?

It is, however, conceivable that direct evidence should be brought forward of my friend having roasted the poor Hindoo, for a few rupees. In that case, what follows? Why, I believe in the evidence—*but I cease to believe in my friend.*

Now the case I wish to put, with your book under my eye, is a very simple one, and I will put it in the most reverential form that I can possibly invent. You

have set up a being, for my worship, who is, you tell me, the governor of the world. You say he is perfectly good,—that he is the Absolute One, although “the limits of religious thought” prevent my having any “conception” of him as the Absolnt One. But you also tell me,—permit me to *suppose* that the case is so,—that you have evidence that he does, or intends to do, something which appears, to my deliberate judgment, not only cruel but unjust,—something immitigably bad. I repeat that I am only putting it as an hypothesis that you *do* say this—but, *on* the hypothesis, let me ask, Of what earthly use is it to tell me that I cannot fully apprehend the Infinite in consciousness? Shall I not make answer—“Sir, your words are meaningless?” But of that, anon. Meanwhile, I demand to know if you have not yourself been urging upon me that *because* I cannot conceive the Infinite—this being has revealed himself to me in a Conditioned or Symbolic way? Be it so, then. But, plainly, my estimate, of whatever conduct may be attributed to this being, must be formed within the same limits of conception as those within which he stands disclosed to me. This is as clear as the daylight. It is a purely arbitrary procedure to descend upon me with the assertion that because there is some-

thing transcending what I perceive, I do *not* perceive the thing which is before me. You might just as reasonably say that I am not to rely upon my multiplication-table, because the Calculus presents insoluble problems—the case would be strictly analogous.* With this mighty being's name upon your lips you come before me, and say—"Regard these lineaments—are they not divine and worthy your worship?" Responding to this appeal, I say, "Yes, they are." You then proceed to exhibit or to relate something else, which these very faculties of mine just invoked by you declare to be *not* divine, but diabolical and incredible; and you forthwith taunt me with presumption, and say, "Oh, but you don't understand the Infinite."

My answer is brief:—*That may be true, or it may be false; but why not try and persuade me of it before? If true, it cuts both ways; and I must now retract my words of homage to your powerful being; for my ignorance of the Infinite may have misled me when I uttered them.* My answer, I say, is brief, but it is decisive; and I defy you to reply to it.

* If a grocer were charged with dishonesty for giving only fourteen ounces to the pound, would it be any answer for him to say that there were difficulties in the Calculus?

All this, I repeat, is upon the hypothesis, not that there are mere “difficulties” and “doubts” in your case ; but that there are difficulties *insuperable*,—difficulties which outweigh the evidence you bring ; which would outweigh twenty million times the evidencee. I will refer in a moment to the question of the Everlasting Place of Wrath ; but, in the meantime, I challenge, point-blank, and not in the worst company, your teaching that the Infinite is not an object of consciousness to man. I need not recall here the fact that the question whether it is so or not is the question which perpetually divides the schools, and is, indeed, one of the forms in which the old dispute between Nominalist and Realist reappears from time to time. I believe that the *foundation* of this dispute is temperamental, and that the divarication of mankind into “Tory” and “Radical,” Cavalier and Puritan, rests upon the same basis as this metaphysical divarication. You quote, with words of admiration, for his “transcendent gifts,” some sentences of Dr Newman, written while he was yet a member of your Church. You do this in answering the *Rambler*, a Roman Catholic organ, which charged you with plagiarising from Dr Newman. You idolise Butler,—whose “Analogy” has been plausibly said to have

made more sceptics than believers, and who is not less plausibly said to have died with scarcely conquerable leanings towards Romanism. I know very well that a *via media* is possible with any form of belief ; and I believe you to be not only a true, but a stanch and very deliberate Protestant. But I know also that for those who, like Butler, have come to feel that faith can rest upon “a serious apprehension,” or for those who, like Pascal, can fancy that they have done God service when they have said, *Le plus sûr est de croire*,—there is but one *natural* place of repose—namely, the bosom of Authority. The only persons who can logically keep out of that refuge, or, at least, can logically keep themselves from feeling the want of it, are such as believe, with Butler at his best, that “*moral fitness is prior to all will whatever.*” How such a sentence found its way into the “Analogy” it is difficult to conceive, since it is sufficient to disintegrate the whole fabric. It belongs, indeed, to the moods in which Butler wrote his “Sermons on Human Nature;” and I pointedly refer to it because it has been hinted that the great man was not sincere when he wrote the “Analogy,” but was playing the advocate in the disguise of a judge. Now, the presence of that sentiment (faint phantasms of which, indeed, are to be

found elsewhere in the same book) is proof of his sincerity, though it is fatal to his argument, considered as anything but political.

The opinion which I hold, that the Absolute *is* given in human consciousness, was not learned by me out of books. It was of spontaneous growth. The first person who, in my knowledge, questioned it, was Mr Samuel Bailey,—a powerful and acute reasoner on your side of the question, whom, I think, you have overlooked. At all events, you do not mention him—or Mr Mill, or Mr Lewes ; who, whatever differences there are between you and them upon the question of revelation, concur with you in rejecting all philosophies which find the Absolute in consciousness.

I hope it is not idle to say distinctly that the opinion was not instilled into me, directly or indirectly, and that nothing has ever shaken it. In the same connexion, it is worth while to say that the sentence you put in the foreground, from Sir William Hamilton —“No difficulty emerges in Theology which had not previously emerged in Philosophy”—did not, when I first encountered it, convey any new idea to me. It is a perfectly obvious remark, and must occur to every inquiring mind, in the very infancy of its inquiries.

When I found, for the first time in my life, upon reading a book of Mr Samuel Bailey's, that there were thinkers who denied that the Absolute is given in consciousness, my surprise was extreme. But a little thought helped me, at once, to (what I then believed, and still believe to be) the real solution of this incongruity in mental experience,—truly terrible as it then appeared in my eyes. I found that two different persons might attach two different meanings to the word consciousness. What I had always meant by it was something purely receptive and spontaneous. What some others meant by it I now perceived to be what I then crudely called the *consciousness of consciousness*—the act of the mind in recognising an impression made upon it.

The discovery of this difference between others and myself set me upon an eager course of reading ; and I was not long in learning that Kant had drawn the very same distinction that I had drawn—only that what I, in my innocence, called *consciousness*, he called *Understanding*, and what I called *consciousness of consciousness* he called *Reason*. In Victor Cousin I saw that the distinction was drawn by others under other names,—the *spontaneous* and *reflective reason*. But I had, at all events, the comfort of feeling that I was not alone

in making the distinction, or in the use to which I applied it.

To that same use I have had once more to apply it, in reference to your "Limits of Religious Thought." You tell me that it is impossible to bring the Absolute down to the forms of logic without contradiction ; that it is excluded by the necessary conditions of human thought ; that, try it which way soever you will, you are met by limitations.

Now, the question whether or not the Idea of the Absolute or Infinite is contained in consciousness is one which every man must attempt to answer for himself. But we must not allow ourselves to be led astray by the scholastic word "limitation," when we are told that it is impossible to reason about the Absolute without limiting it. The mere formation of a syllogism implies a verbal limitation, but words do not change things as they *are* in their own nature. Even if you made out that the Absolute or Infinite is any more "limited," when it is reasoned about, than the Conditioned or the Finite, we should only be where we were. We should have got rid of nothing ; we should have gained nothing. If two ideas are on such different planes that they cannot legitimately be so posited in discussion as to collide, what then ? If they must not be brought to

bear upon each other in one way,—so, not in another. If a “regulative” conception is all that can be obtained, then the regulative conception, *if it REPRESENTS the thing, must also REPRESENT the difficulties.* We are, it must be repeated, only where we were before.

But I deny that in reasoning, the Infinite is any more “limited” than the Finite. You cannot reason at all without “limitations.” One proposition, and one only, escapes this necessity, and that proposition is a barren one,—the Squire’s prime postulate in the “Vicar of Wakefield,”—“*Whatever is is;*” or $A = A$. But the moment you frame, *about anything whatever*, a proposition, which goes beyond that model, you “limit” the subject of it. This, indeed, is nothing more than what Mr Mill points out in his “Logic,”—that in the *dictum de omni et nullo* the major premiss contains the conclusion. Of course; and if you try to frame the simplest proposition about something finite, you will see that you “limit” it. Thus: *This rose-tree has leaves, flowers, and branches.* Now, nobody objects to that proposition; but, in point of fact, the leaves, flowers, and branches are *parts* of the rose-tree; and in enumerating these constituents we have “limited” the thing itself. If the rose-tree could speak, it would say, “*I am the leaves, branches, flowers,*” &c. One step further—let us

suppose that we have got together *all* the constituent parts of the rose-tree, and that we then say, *Rose-tree = branches, leaves, flowers, &c. &c. &c.*, (completing the enumeration with scientific accuracy.) Here, by the canon that the whole can only be equal to the parts, we have, surely, got the thing itself? But no, we have not. No addition of scientifically enumerated parts can give us the idea of the *individuated whole*. I am not going to repeat scholastic nonsense about the necessary *substratum of attributes*; or the “principle of individuation which each thing hath in itself.” But the truth is as I say,—that addition of enumerated parts does not furnish the mind with a conception of the whole. Here, again, we are face to face with the Absolute! Nor can we stop at this point. For this whole is conceived as a whole precisely as it stands in the relation of a part to something else, and is so differentiated or individualised in consciousness. And so on, *ad infinitum*, throughout the whole world of ideas and things till you come to the Absolute.

In other words, you perceive I deny, and challenge the proof of, the proposition that *Religious Thought* has any limits which are not, in kind, common to all Thought whatever. No problem emerges in Theology which had not already emerged in Philosophy. Very

well—but let us take care to know what we mean by “philosophy.” In plain truth, the problem of the Absolute “emerges” *everywhere*—we may find it, at bed and board, in the common things of every-day routine; in the conduct of our personal affairs; in the administration of (what is called) justice; and, indeed, wherever we look for it. If anybody asserts that we are nevertheless often bound to act as it did *not* exist,—I take upon myself to contradict him, and to maintain, on the contrary, that any act whatever which assumes the extrusion of the problem from the *grounds* of the act is *ipso facto* wrong. Probability is the guide of life? Yes, probability *recognised* as probability—not probability hoisted up to the place of certainty by treachery of the will.

Let me, however, try and get at the subject by another road. I take up your Third Lecture—the one in which you set yourself to state the “limits of religious thought” in the most explicit form. Here is one of them:—“It is impossible that man, so long as he exists in time, should contemplate an object in whose existence there is *no* time. For the thought by which he contemplates it must be one of his own mental states: *it must have a beginning and an end: it must*

occupy a certain portion of duration, as a fact of human consciousness."

Now, I challenge the words in italics. All reflection—all *consciousness* of consciousness—all *recognition* of consciousness—must imply time—must posit something as past and something as present. But that consciousness itself is in time,—has a beginning and an end,—I utterly deny. It stands related to duration as a point stands related to extension. It is *now*, and nothing *but now*. It knows nothing of “time” as distinguished from “eternity.” It is, in a word, *absolute*. You cannot make a *proposition* about it without “limiting” it; neither can you of the rose-tree, or the table on which you write. But that is another thing; and not a thing which hinders accurate reasoning about it.

Again, in your eagerness to insist upon this time-limit, (or any other,) you surely prove too much? Consider. Either the Idea of the Absolute *is*,—does exist,—or it does not. If it is not posited in Consciousness, how can you say it is “limited?” How can you say it is anything at all? Do you mean to say that the Absolute is an absurd conception *in itself*, or do you not? No, you do not. But if not, what is the use of saying that it cannot be reasoned about?

The mind conceives it—it then recognises or remembers its conception—and so, scholastically speaking, “limits” it. It is totally impossible that any mind whatever, finite or infinite, should *reflect*, without so “limiting” the object conceived. In that way, an infinite mind reflecting on itself would “limit” it. But what does all this word-play come to, when you have done? Why, that a Thing is “limited,” because it is *known* to exist. That I cannot reason about the Absolute, because I know the Absolute *in the only way in which it is possible that ANYTHING should be known by me*. Whether it amounts to anything whatever to say that such “laws of thought” as I know are merely human, and that other modes of conception are possible, I will consider in a moment.

In the meanwhile, let it be said that I, of course, entirely accept your statement,—“In the antithesis between the thinker and the object of his thought,—between myself and that which is related to me,—we find the type [and the source] of the universal contrast between the one and the many, the permanent and the changeable, the real and the apparent.” Only what I want to know is this:—If moral relations exist between me and others like me, in spite of this apparent conflict of the absolute and the limited, and if they exist in

such a way that I may unhesitatingly reason about them, why may I not do the same when the question is between my own inscrutable personal absolute, and the Absolute of absolutes? As related to myself, to my *Me*, every other *Me* is phenomenal,—limited, in contrast with the “absolute” of my own identity. Yet my conception of the Moral Law is absolute.* Now, if that be so, to tell me that the relation between my individual absolute and the Absolute of absolutes (I make you a present of the verbal absurdity) is so obscure that I cannot reason out my moral relations with Him, subject to the same limitations as would apply upon the other level, is, in fact, to tell me, that because God is infinite, my relations with Him are not moral at all. And this is, indeed, what your book comes to. God, you say, must be conceived of by me in representative symbols; “in terms of the moral system.” My answer is, Let it be so understood. Any formula will serve, upon any subject, so long as proportion be kept, and so long as the discussion moves within the limits *on both sides*. But you, on your part, go *beyond* the limits fixed by the use of symbols, and the “terms of the moral system,” if you introduce the difficulties of conceiving the Infinite to account for any

* Of course, I do not mean that any *rule* can be final or absolute.

apparent perturbation in the action of the scheme which has, expressly, excluded the Infinite as unintelligible.

I need not trouble myself to take specific illustrations in any number; but I will take one,—the question of the Eternity of Punishment.

Allow me, in the first place, to observe that you are assuredly wrong in the matter of fact, in supposing that those who deny the doctrine upon purely moral grounds, omit to take into account the possibility of sin in a future state. “Why,” you ask, for substance—“why, if a man may go on sinning for ever, may he not be punished for ever?” But, believe me, this is not a new thought. When I was a mere boy, the very difficulty which presented itself to my mind was that any being *should* go on sinning for ever, as well as being miserable for ever. *This* lessen the pressure of the doctrine upon the moral sense! Why, it increases it a millionfold!

But, in the consideration of this subject, it must not be forgotten that here, as elsewhere, your own argument, if it be good for anything, will recoil upon you. If I do not understand the relation of the finite to the infinite, then it is quite possible that a denunciation of

an infinitely-extended penalty against a finite being—supposing such a denunciation to be authentically made by the real God of the universe—may hereafter be found by me to resolve itself into some form of the relation in question, which may have in it none of the terrors which the doctrine is said to hold out to the eye of sinners. Thus, for example : the conception of Evil as possible belongs to the conflict of the Many with the One in consciousness. But it is part of the very idea of evil that it is something which is to cease. On the other hand, the moment I form propositions, the moment I reason about the Good, I am forced to posit it in contrast with the Evil, so that the two ideas are seen to be logical correlatives. Not only so ; the moral universe may, for what I know, be infinite. Creatures of God may go on, world after world, cycle after cycle, in relations with the infinite which can only be expressed “in terms of the moral system,” and in that case the Symbol of Punishment becomes an Everlasting Necessity. Now, I do not understand, say you, the relations of the finite and the infinite. But Evil, as presented to me in detail, must cease, or no “moral system” (for you to get your “terms” out of) is possible. So it is quite certain that no one creature can stay for ever in the Place of Evil. And it would

still remain for the supporters of the doctrine of Everlasting Punishment to show (not only that, perhaps, Heaven and Hell are presented in Scripture in everlasting antithesis under visible images, but) that it is anywhere affirmed that any single finite being should be for ever miserable.*

I am not going to press this subject, which I only introduce by the way. What I *do* care to press is the fact, that in telling me I do not understand the Infinite, and must frame propositions about it, if at all, "in terms of the moral system," you are employing a two-edged sword. You know a great deal better than I do what that means,—it means a self-refuting logic.

But now, before laying down my pen, I will try my hand, once more, at the question of the "laws of human thought;" and, this time, omitting all theological reference. And, with all the good intent in the world, all conceivable willingness to be convinced, I cannot see any sense in "laws of thought," whoever talks about them. I cannot, turn it which way I will, make anything but the Squire's thesis ("Whatever is is," or

* In the course of my task as Editor, I have discovered that this method of treating the question of future retribution is not new.
—ED.

A=A) out of the assertion that all truth is relative. "All truth is relative"—I do not remember that that phrase occurs in your Bampton Lectures, but that is what they come to. And it seems to me an utterly barren proposition—amounting to this:—Being what we are, we are what we are. But if we were something else, we should be something different. Seeing what we see, we *do* see it, and can (only) form conclusions about it. But if we saw something else, we *should* see something else, and could then form conclusions about *that*.

If it be intended to say, that to every truth there must go two factors, subject and object, and that a change in either might or might not (at the pleasure of a superior power making the change) "alter" the truth—I have no objection to offer, except this:—that no truth can be "*altered*," though, one state of things being substituted for another, a fresh formula may become necessary.

I look at the grass. It is green. Now, obviously, the same result may ensue, if the colour of the grass be changed, *and my eye* too. It is still possible that the grass should appear green, if such an alteration be made in my organ of vision that another colour will make upon the latter precisely the same impression.

Again, the grass may remain as it is, and my eye may be changed, so that the grass shall appear crimson. In the same way, the apparent size of objects might be altered by varying the lens of the eye. But what then ?

If a man were to go to sleep at night leaving external objects as usual, and find, when he awoke in the morning, that the church-steeple opposite the window was a hundred times higher than the tall chimney of the vitriol factory, he would be aware of a change.

But if, while he slept, the size of *every* object, house, chimney, and steeple, were increased in equal proportions, what then ?

Why, then, he would still be conscious of a change, *unless his own dimensions were altered.*

If his own dimensions *were* altered, he would *not* be conscious of a change; and all his "relative" knowledge would be just where it was before: *i.e.*, practically absolute; in such sense absolute, that nothing is gained, for rhyme or reason, by calling it "relative;" and, in assuming its uncertainty, a man only cuts away his own ground from beneath his feet. He must have some postulate before he can think at all; he does not make the balance from the adding up of his sum wrong by striking out equal quantities on opposite

sides ; but, if he did, his arithmetic is *all* false, and he may put up his slate and pencil.

If, by saying that all knowledge is relative, it be meant that we might, supposing we were there, find something different in Jupiter from what we find on our own planet, it is difficult to conceive why so barren a proposition should be urged so far. No doubt we might, and what of it ? Either, in that case, *we* should remain the same, or we should be altered ; and either way the dilemma before stated applies. The sum would still add up the same.

If an inhabitant of Jupiter saw green as crimson, or one as three, he could not communicate his difference of perception to me. The discovery of the difference would never be made between us, could never interfere with our relations, (supposing relations possible.)

The same rule applies to questions of right and wrong. If there is any difference between Jupiter and this planet upon such questions, it cannot be anything but *a difference of plane lying within the same parallel*. Jupiter and we (that is) could never collide in moral perception. Any difference existing between us could never be valid, *quâd* difference. We could never understand each other as disagreeing.

In other words, no truth is relative in the sense of

being alterable by any shifting of the position of one of the factors. The perception of a truth is final for the mind which perceives. The contrary supposition is suicidal ; for if one “truth” may be falsified by a change of plane, so may another, and the general conclusion is then in the same predicament as any particular application of it,—which is absurd. The case is precisely the same as if it were alleged that Achilles can never overtake the Tortoise, because the earth is moving through space in the direction in which Achilles is running ; or, *vice versa*, that the Tortoise must impinge upon Achilles because the earth slips from under it.

The very word “ relativity ” implies the existence of a fixed point from which the position of the two (or more) objects can be taken. That fixed point is given in the individual consciousness, and the mind will insist for ever that the alleged relativity of all our knowledge is nonsense,—for when you come to the last link in the chain, the question waits, and will not be put by,—relativity to What ?

While I have been writing the last lines of this letter, I have picked up at a stall, a book which, if you had lived a hundred and forty years ago, you might

have written ; only you would have written it a great deal better. The title-page is as follows :—

“The Procedure, Extent, and Limits of Human Understanding. Isa. lv. 9,—‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways ; and my thoughts than your thoughts.’ London : Printed for William Innys, at the west end of St Paul’s. MDCCXXVIII.”

And that I do not misrepresent when I say that you might have written it, will appear from the opening sentences of the author’s “Introduction to the Whole Design :”—

“Some years past a small treatise was published with this title, ‘A Letter in answer to a book entitled, Christianity not Mysterious ; as also to all those who set up for Reason and Evidence, in opposition to Revelation and Mysteries.’ It plainly appears to have been written in haste, and with the incorrectness of a youthful and as yet unformed style ; but the foundation the author all along proceeds upon, for the confutation of his adversary, and for laying open the fallacy of men’s arguments against Divine Revelation and our Christian mysteries, drawn from the topics of strict reason, certainty, and evidence, seems to be solid and just ; and, indeed, the only one upon which such a firm and un-

shaken superstructure can be raised, as may be proof against all the arguments and objections of unbelievers.

" That letter proceeds entirely upon a distinction at first laid down between a proper and immediate idea or conception of a thing ; such as we have of the things of this world, which are the proper and immediate objects of our sense and our reason ; and that idea or conception which is mediate only and improper, such as we necessarily form of the things of another world. It is there asserted as a sure and incontestable truth, that we have no immediate proper idea at all of God, or any of His attributes as they are in themselves, or of anything else in another world ; and, consequently, that we are under a necessity of conceiving all things supernatural by analogy,—that is, by the mediation and substitution of those ideas we have of ourselves, and of all other things of nature.

" This distinction is there affirmed to be absolutely necessary for the ascertaining and settling the bounds and measure of our knowledge ; for showing the true limits and utmost extent of human understanding, that we may clearly and distinctly apprehend where mere knowledge ends, and faith begins ; where it is they meet again, and inseparably combine together for the enlargement of our understanding vastly beyond its

native sphere ; for opening to the mind a new and immense scene of things otherwise imperceptible ; and for a rational, well-grounded assent to such truths concerning them as are a solid foundation for all religion, natural and revealed."

I have been greatly entertained in reading this old-fashioned book, which is full of curiosities and oddities ; but it is not such hard reading as your " Limits of Religious Thought," and helps me to reconsider, at the last moment, the whole question, as stated by another mind ; similar to your own, but, I should judge, far less powerful and acute. The result is that I remain just where I was, and think that if " Thought " has the " Limits " you give to it as applicable to the Divine ideas, the only religion possible to man is a political one ; a mere making-the-best-of-it, without sanctity, and without obligation.

H. H.

TO THE
REV. J. H. NEWMAN, D.D.

IT is impossible that I can be more a shadow to you than you to me. I have not the least idea that words of mine stand any chance of reaching your ears, and yet I write to you.

The whole history of your Oxford career, and your secession from Protestantism, took place when I was not only much younger, but when I was not in the habit of attending to what went on in the world. I think your name first became real to me in connexion with the Achilli story. My opinion was rather a complicated one. I thought you had transgressed the bounds of any function that can be supposed to belong to a public teacher. But I also thought the verdict of the jury wrong—which is another way of saying what I thought of Achilli. But now will come what, I fear, will pain sincere Roman Catholics who read this: only it must be spoken. I certainly did feel that, in any case, where the witnesses

were Roman Catholics, I should think that their testimony was especially doubtful. I had not only the vague ideas, which most Protestants have, that your Church does not class falsehood among the “mortal” sins; but I had a clear perception that, *in the moral scheme of a Religion which bases itself upon Authority, it is totally impossible that Truth should be a virtue of unvarying obligation.*

I am still of the same opinion, and hold it to be demonstrable. The same difficulty presses upon all forms of Protestantism,—and they are many,—which profess that their Ultimate Conception of the Basis of Duty is a “regulative” one. The difficulty does, in manifest stubborn fact, attach to some forms of Protestantism, and is constantly bearing its bitter fruit; though not so flagrantly as in the exoteric, or popular forms of Romanism.*

But this has nothing whatever to do with the tendencies of particular minds. I do not doubt,—should not be so absurd as to doubt,—that there are as many honourable Romanists as Protestants. All I say is, that when a Romanist maintains the supreme excellence

* Once for all, I trust to be excused if, from casual necessities of perspicuity, I use such words as “Romanist,” “Roman Catholic.” I mean no offence.

of truth, (supposing him to maintain that as an abstract proposition,) he is illogical at the expense of his creed, and by compulsion of his better nature.

There is, moreover, a great distinction to be drawn between *honour* and *truthfulness*. Honour is common enough among creedists of all kinds ; it is a sentiment of personal fidelity, which is operative chiefly among friends, and is usually strong or weak just in proportion as attachment is so. It is a quasi-feminine virtue, and quite consistent with a total want of intellectual veracity. It is, indeed, no paradox to say that honour is commonly strongest in minds that have the least perception of abstract truth. Sometimes, not often, we find a soul in whom the two things meet in a higher synthesis. I should not hesitate to say that I take yours to be such a soul ; though I think, the synthesis being incomplete, error creeps into your mind in the moments of oscillation, of overlapping, of imperfect solution.

I will not in this letter labour the idea of the distinction between Truth and Honour ;* suffice it to say that I think it fundamentally the same as what distinguishes Roundhead from Cavalier ; and that Charles

* See Vol. I., Truth and Honour.

the Second was quite correct when he said Roman Catholicism was the religion *for a gentleman*. I do not say this offensively. I merely mean that the same type of mind which makes the gentleman or the cavalier tends to become Roman Catholic, or Christian-Fetichistic in the extreme degree. For I call Romanism Christian Fetichism.

Let me at once say, that I am entirely at one with you,—as all men who strive to be good must be at one,—in your homage to the teaching upon the subject of personal truthfulness, which you attribute to the Church of your adoption:—“It is better for the sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions on it to die of starvation in extremest agony, than that one soul, I will not say should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, or should steal one poor farthing *without excuse?*” I do not at all doubt that this is the ideal teaching of your Church, and I do not sympathise with a comment made upon it by one of the acutest of your critics,* who says:—“It seems to follow that if Dr Newman

* *Fraser's Magazine*, September 1864.

had to choose between giving a warning which would save thousands of lives, as by going a mile to a telegraph office to warn the people of Sheffield of the bursting of the dam, and preventing a venial sin by sitting at home, he ought to prevent the sin, and permit the catastrophe." This is, I will dare to say, an idle criticism. It presupposes that you should be gifted with infallible vision, and that you should be responsible for the conduct of another. We need not waste words about this—it is obviously mistaken. But what I shall contend in the proper place, is that the teaching of your Church just referred to comes to the ground for want of a proper basis.

Let me also, in fairness, remark that, on the other hand, I do *not* sympathise with those who endeavour to criticise away, or explain away, the persecuting character of your Church. It is logically bound to persecute; it *must* persecute; it shows unmistakably, in our own day, the persecuting tendency. Its bishops taunt the English Church as by law established with incapacity to enforce decrees of orthodoxy, and the whole of its literature upon the subject of persecution is a literature of evasion, which can only deceive those who are not

familiar with the legerdemain of words. The same reason which makes me sure that your Church *must* persecute, makes me ready to believe that, when she has persecuted, she has done it with a fierceness and a cruelty to which the history of Protestantism can show no parallel. It *must* be so ; it has been so ; and if I could wonder at anything, I should spend the rest of my mortal life in wondering that any claim for “emancipation” or “toleration” should ever be put in by a Church which distinctly refuses it the moment it gets the upper hand. “The Catholic Church,” you say, “claims not only to judge infallibly on religious questions, but to animadadvert on opinions on secular matters which bear upon religion, on matters of philosophy, of science, of literature, of history ;” [that is, upon all matters whatsoever,] “and *it demands our submission to the claim.* It claims to censure books, to silence authors, and to forbid discussions.” This is, at all events, explicit. The only comment I make upon it is, that it is absolutely *unmoral* and *absurd*. Such a claim can only be allowed by either minds which are by constitution unconscientious ; by minds which, however good, are too stupid to draw an inference ; or, lastly, by minds which, like your own, have been twisted by personal emotions from faith in absolute

truth to that scepticism of sentiment which naturally exclaims, "Oh, for a shelter! a teacher! a ruler! a guide! Oh, to love and work and pray for ever, and doubt no more, no more, no more!" An exclamation which I quite understand, but which demands the impossible.

However, let me proceed. A long while after the Achilli trial, I became acquainted with one of your hymns—

"Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom ;"

and lastly, with the "Lyra Apostolica." But you came to occupy no prominent place in my thoughts, until the controversy took place between you and Mr Kingsley. Since then, I have read your "Apologia." You will dispense me, I am sure, from commonplaces of admiration, and also you will excuse me when I say that the book produces no more effect upon me in the way of conviction than if every page had been blank, instead of being filled to overflowing with narrative or discussion of the most eloquent or ingenious order.

I think Mr Kingsley made a terrible mistake in associating your name with what he had to say about the relation of Roman Catholicism to Truthfulness.

The general reader, inattentive, inapprehensive, or forgetful, would be pretty sure to translate his criticism upon that relation into a charge of personal untruthfulness as against yourself. Thus, it was wrong of Mr Kingsley to express himself so widely ; and it was natural that you should be indignant in reply. Yet, if he gave you pain, he, too, has received pain, in the course of the discussion ; and between you two, the scales may, perhaps, hang evenly.* I do not doubt, never should have doubted, that you have, in its highest degree, the honour of an English gentleman ; or rather, the honour of an English —

I fear to offend you, and yet the thing I was about to say, is, I believe, strictly true, and one that demands to be spoken. I ask pardon, then, of your sacred office, of your gray hairs, of your spotless life, of your “transcendent gifts,”† for the comparison I am going to make. But it seems to me that you have, not so much the honour of an English gentleman as the honour of an English LADY. I think the honour of the Celibate Man (however sacred the motive of his celi-

* Except, indeed, that in your “Apologia,” (p. 66, Appendix,) you do Mr Kingsley an injustice upon the question of “Virtue for its own sake.” You have entirely mistaken him ; and the nature of the mistake is even glaringly obvious.

† See Letter to Mr Mansel.

bacy) tends to assume this character,—*always*. In other words, it tends to assume a character in which the sensibility to Truth, *quoad Truth*, becomes so deeply modified by personal loyalty, that it is very often scarcely recognisable to a purely critical or philosophic eye.

As I have gone so far, I may as well exhaust, however hastily, what I have to say in the same direction. I have said that I believe the Celibate character to tend naturally to what is feminine in conscience and in emotion; for example, that it is apt to lay too much stress upon *symbols* of the truth; and that, while compassionate till resentment is aroused, it may become *cruel* when that feeling no longer sleeps,—all which is essentially feminine. But I must add, that the celibate mind tends to become feminine in other respects as well. It is apt to grow *funtastical* and *capricious*. These are both, eminently, female weaknesses; they are both aggravated in what is called “old-maidism;” they both appear in the type “old bachelor.” There is no disrespect in this criticism, and, in any case, it is true. The keen eye of our greatest poet has not overlooked it. Let Arthur, *flös regum*, do what he chooses with his banded knights vowed to chastity, he will find that every advantage gained in this world

must have its drawbacks ; that every good must pay toll in the course of realisation :—

“ Albeit I know my knights *fantastical*,”

says King Arthur ; and fantastic is just what the celibate or cloistered mind tends to become.

I have read, with intense sympathy, your account of your own mental history ; but it seemed, while I read, as if I were going over a mass of rocks and shoals off which I had been myself warned long ago ; rocks and shoals which I have escaped, even if it should be thought that I have, on the other hand, been misguided by a spectral pilot, or a pilot that is in league with pirates,—or that I have, in any way, paid *my* toll at too heavy a rate. In what follows, I wish it also to be understood that I wave aside entirely the common “ Protestant” arguments against separate doctrines of your Church. Upon the subjects, for example, of repentance and justification, I do not know that the esoteric teaching of your highest doctors differs ultimately from that of Luther. To prayers for the dead, I do not believe the majority of Protestants object, except in form, whatever they say. To an impressive symbolic ritual, I certainly

have no dislike ; but the contrary. To houses of sacred refuge, sanctuaries, I again feel no repugnance, but the contrary. I do, indeed, refuse to recognise the final validity of any life-long vow whatever, (in that respect agreeing with the early Protestants, and founding myself upon ultimate moral reasons,) and I object to all compulsory discipline. But the function of the Church, as the Keeper of the Keys of Sanctuary, I, with all my heart, defer to. Yet, for all this, and for much more that I could say, which would make foolish people think me very near you, I am a Protestant of the intensest. The gulf between me and your Church is literally infinite. For I think it is *not*, in truth, a Church, but simply an institution, whose basis is not moral at all, and which cannot, logically, invoke the sanction of a single controlling idea,—except that of FEAR.

Thus, though in writing what, I daresay, you will never see, I feel bound,—in that courtesy which is only another name for justice, or for truth which is better than verbal,—to speak of your “Church,” because that word is what you believe to represent the real character of the community with which you are connected; yet, I hold it to be a purely physical despotism, which has in it nothing sacred but what,

with the impunity of bad logic, it contrives to steal. Saintly souls, true members of the Church Absolute, the one family in heaven and earth, I know,—with deep humility I write it,—there are among you ; saints, the latchets of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. But what then ? I rejoice to believe that (faculties being measured against conditions) there is not a corner of the earth where such souls are *not* to be found.

I would desire to lay some stress upon the last paragraph or two of this letter, because a little honest attention to a case like mine might give pause to a great many persons who seem to me to go and attach themselves to your Church, with a rush and a run, for imperfect reasons ; for reasons which would not have any *determining* force, if these persons had not first drugged their consciences upon vital points. At the risk of being misconceived, or, at least, misrepresented, I would ask such persons, if they happen to read these lines, to consider my case. I am predisposed to a splendid poetic ritual ; I should not find any merely *ritualistic* dogma (*e. g.*, transubstantiation) a stumbling-block *that would exclude me*: I am very seriously of opinion that modern life suffers for the want of that idea of sanctuary which the Roman Catholic

Church has tried (though with, I think, much injustice) to embody in practice ; I am strongly attracted towards that type of kindly human service which we often see a priest of that Church illustrating so powerfully. All this is true ; and I have, besides, felt that weariness of internal doubt and struggle which so strongly tempts men to fling themselves at the feet of almost any external rule, only for peace ;—and yet I have never, for one single moment of my life, felt it even remotely possible that I should ever become a Roman Catholic.

Apart from the finally operative reason which keeps me a Protestant,—though a protesting one,—there is indeed a reason of intense dislike to Romanism, (pray excuse me if I occasionally employ this word,) which has from childhood oppressed me with downright horror. I hold that it is indirectly responsible for all the horrible complications of European ethics and practice upon the most important of human relations. *You*, at least, will not dispute the share which the “African Fathers” have had in forming the mind of Western Europe.* For my part, I was barely out

* See “Apologia,” p. 407.

of my childhood, when I discerned that it is to the teaching of the Fathers, introducing an element of orientalism, which has reached us through channels of mediæval sentiment and scholasticism mingled, that we are indebted, horribly indebted, not indeed for the existence, but for the factitious authority which attends, in the modern mind, that view of the relation referred to which has ended in turning it into a sewage question. This view is one which entirely suits the lowest type of mind, and scarcely offends the *lower* types, so that it obtains a degree of reception sufficient to keep it alive and influential. Nay, so deeply has the poison penetrated, that a man like Mr Carlyle has, in a repulsive passage of "Sartor Resartus,"* treated that particular province of the Sphere of Silence, as if the silence were to be that of disgust instead of reverential tenderness. In the instinct, the traditions, and the poetry, as in the ancient life of the north-western races of Europe, the woman is the equal of the man ; the relation between them is, in all its phases, sublime and "pure," and the crisis of that relation is not a shameful and regrettable concession to a despotic brute element, but the breaking into flower

* See Book iii. chap. 3.

of a beautiful emotion, under the influence of which the human being is at his highest. The oriental idea is opposed to this. Matter is "impure," (whatever that word means, applied to stocks and stones.) Our bodies are "corrupt," (whatever *that* means; but it means nothing;) woman is "unclean," inferior, subjected; and that which the unsophisticated Teutonic mind calls the sweet rapture of conquering Life, is a brute necessity, like a wolf's appetite, or a tiger's blood-thirst, and, even when sprinkled with holy water, is a thing tolerated, and not co-ordinated. How to deal with it is made a sewage question; and, practically, the whole question *is* a sewage one with the average human being, degraded as he is by the application from without of a pressure which makes the lowest ideal final. All classes and degrees of error are possible upon this subject, and out of them all a return to the truth is possible, so long as the error be not ossified into dogma, and guarded by religious lightnings—but not *then*. Now, the very lowest of all possible ideals in this regard is that which your Church seems to me to have adopted, and recommended and handed onward, with a too fatal success, to Protestants in general; the ideal, I mean, of a degraded appetite which is to be at the mercy of external force. The degraded ideal once con-

secrated, there is no appeal, no hope. Down goes the popular sentiment, never to rise again. It so happens that in Europe, the higher Teutonic sentiment yet survives to give it battle, *and cause boundless confusion, whose practical issue is boundless immorality.* Against the consecration of a false ideal nothing prevails, *except* for ends of confusion. Far better an ideal ever so low, if unconsecrated. For example, I should consider a people who had adopted polygamy, as a *tolerable* state of things, in a more hopeful condition morally, than a people who had adopted the implicit ideal of Romanism, along with belief in its consecration. From polygamy to the higher level of a pure monogamy, the human mind has shown itself capable of working its own way upward. But purity, in conjunction with the Romish dogma, is, in the nature of things, impossible. The very meaning of common words is corrupted. Modern language is full of ridiculous contradictions, founded upon *doubles entendres* growing out of the reception of a false ideal for divine. I need only refer, in explanation, to conventional applications of such words as "immaculate," "unstained," "unsullied," "pure,"—applications which constantly imply that a completed life is—maculate.

This is a matter upon which your opponent, Mr Kingsley, has often come to blows with what he takes to be the teaching of your Church, explicit or implicit. I do not always agree with Mr Kingsley, either as to the substance or the method of his argument. Some parts of my own doctrine upon this subject are stricter than his, others are wider ; but in the main I am with him in this regard, and think, that in striving to make love, for its own sake, and in all its phenomena, beautiful and sacred, he has done a noble work, and helped to set up against vice a barrier millionfold stronger than a mountain-wall of dogma, backed by regiments of inquisitors, confessors, police, and paternal governments : the barrier, I mean, of a renovated sentiment. Still, since there are bad people in the world, and sudden complications among the best, I freely concede to external authority the validity of a negative, of a *Thou shalt not*, in this matter ; but never, explicitly or implicitly, the right to say *Thou shalt*, in any segment of the sphere of involuntary emotion and involuntary function. I assert that the pretence that such a right exists is at the bottom of all the sexual *vice* that lives ; I do not say all the error, in the adoption of inferior ideals ; for error, however gross, may have

conscience behind it, and so long as there is one grain of that “salt of the earth,” hope is certain, and the best is possible.

In all that precedes, I have striven to distinguish between what I think may be, from the *policy* of your Church, inferred to be its doctrines; and the shape which the truths those doctrines seek to represent assume in minds of a high order,—such as yours, or such as that of Madame de Guyon. I do not doubt the exquisite purity and nobleness of such minds; I only affirm that the dogmas to which they adhere cannot breathe in the inner atmosphere of such minds. The dogma and the instinct are discordant; and I try to drag the discordance into the open day, because I discover that beautiful souls, attracted within the circle of this luminous atmosphere, constantly perish by the dogmas. But now, to come closer to the main purpose of your work. In relation to that main purpose, you found yourself upon the old argument from probability, as stated by Butler and Hume. I think it can be shown that they have both misstated it.

“Probability,” I am told, “is the guide of life.”

If we are to be tied down to figures of speech, I

should greatly prefer to say probability is the *crutch* of life.

If it be intended to say that probability is an indication of the path to be taken in life, I have only to record my assent, and add my surprise that people should think it necessary to insist on such a truism.

But if it be meant,—as, in order to give any value to the argument, it *must* be meant,—that when, in the face of long odds, we are determined to action by some specific probability, then that specific probability is the whole cause or justification of our conduct,—I deny it. We act, in such case, upon the specific probability, *backed by a general trust, which is practically infinite*. A general trust, namely, that the whole scheme of things is a true scheme, and that things are what they appear to be. It does not matter to my present purpose whether this trust is a result of cumulative induction or not,—it *is*,—in every human heart it is, it was, it will be, it must be, or there is no $\gamma\theta\eta$ possible to thought. It is in every page of every literature; in every hope, in every fear that invokes retributive ideas; in every hour of human history; in every nook and cranny of the life that we know. In proportion as the specific probability is small, the mind invokes that higher general probability upon which all

its trust is built,—the probability, namely, that the occult forces of the universe are on the side of goodness, justice, and compassion.

When I recall the strange uses to which the argument from probability, as it is called, (it *ought* to be called the argument from fear,) is put in the defence of incredible dogma, I cannot fail to perceive that men mistake *the effect of the habit of belief* for an *addition to the proof*. This is natural, perhaps, but for all that it is absurd. To believe on probability is to believe on preponderating evidence; and upon the assumption that the scale may one day be turned. You believe, upon such preponderating evidence,—and in spite of difficulties which you represent as truly awful,—that there is a good God. You believe that it is probable He would speak to men. You believe that it is probable that He *has* spoken to men through such and such means of communication. And you wind up with an Infallible Authority which may dictate whatever dogma it pleases. But this is sheer nonsense. You cannot get a final certainty or infallibility out of a process which begins with a probability.* Protestants, I know, are guilty of the same absurdity in another

* See Vol. I. p. 209.

way; but they are not so logical with it as your Church, which begins with a personal authority, and ends with one. But, in fact, you all alike confound two different things. The moral sentiment is ineradicable, and it demands an objective counterpart—in other words, Duty is certain, and God is certain. Here, indeed, you may say, without glaring absurdity, that “a thousand difficulties do not make one doubt”—and the same of anything which can be inferred from these propositions. But the moment you forsake these initial propositions, or the line of inference from them,—and, beginning at the other side of the argument, endeavour to work up to the same point, you have parted, for good and all, with every atom of benefit which the *direct* argument could give you, and it becomes perfectly legitimate to say to you, at any and every point in your progress, “No, this will not do; you are off the line; you may produce *your* line to all eternity, and it will never meet the line produced from the initial point.”

A curious example of mistaken use of the probability argument is to be found in the assertion so commonly made that we cannot be *sure* God is good unless He tells us so. I must not be accused of irreverence if I say that this is utter nonsense. So long as I do not know the nature of God,—if He does not stand revealed

to me in my heart,—not completely, but as completely as I can ever know Him in His moral nature,—then I must frame the proposition differently, and write it,—I cannot be sure an Unknown Being is good, unless He tells me so. Now this way of putting it at once exposes the sophistry. For if I do not know the Being to be good, why should I place any dependence upon what He says? I have no reason whatever for believing Him. But, again, let us suppose I think this Being is *probably* good. It then appears that my reasons for believing what He says will be exactly proportioned to the strength of the probability of His goodness. This is all as plain as the sun in his sky. But what shall be done unto the man who now comes forward, as all Romanists and a large majority of Protestants do, (though less logically,) to say that I am to apply one test of goodness in arriving at my first probability, and another in judging of what the Being in question is alleged to have said of himself, or of me, or of others, or to have announced that he will do? Done unto him? I know not. But I *do* know this, that his words pass by me like the idle wind, back them as he may with unseen terrors. The argument from probability, I repeat, gets weaker, not stronger, at every step, and

to proceed upon the contrary assumption is, not to convince me, but to catch me in a trap.

I am, myself, not furious about the doctrine of transubstantiation. I can quite understand Paley being content to call it a harmless superstition. But I do think Tillotson's argument against it conclusive, and as it illustrates the whole subject of probability I reproduce it, as quoted by David Hume.*

The truth is, the real clincher in this argument from probability is *Fear*. It simply comes to this—*le plus sûr est de croire*. In other words, it is prudent to think so and so. This is not only absurd, but infamous. You cannot believe because it is the safest plan. You may stab yourself with a spiked girdle all day long, and all night too, as Pascal did ; and I shall profoundly pity you. But, when all is done, belief founded on probability must be proportioned to the evidence. In so far as the belief is flogged up to outward expression by apprehension, present or future ; by uneasiness of mind ; by desire of rest ; by sympathy with friends, or with great masses of thought and feeling,—it is immoral and futile. It is a negative quantity ; it is zero ; it is *not*.

* See Appendix.

I refer, above, to “sympathy with great masses of thought and feeling,” because this appears to me to be what has a powerful influence for evil over minds like yours. It has a powerful influence over mine, and over everybody else’s, I believe. But when it tempts me to *believe* this, that, or the other ; or to persuade myself that I believe ; or to profess that I believe, I am bound to exorcise the evil spirit. *Apage Sathanas !* is what I say to it, for it is better to be unamiable, and to stand alone in the universe for ever, if God calls me to do so, than to be untrue to one of my inmost thoughts. I do not, for an instant, suggest that there was any conscious untruth in your mind, at any time, while the “change” was going on ; but I cannot declare that I think I discern the existence of unshaken intellectual veracity, and I *must* declare that you seem to me to have been powerfully influenced by your affections, and your natural tendency to look up and venerate. The letters from which, with such generous frankness, you furnish us with passages which open the very galleries, I will not say chambers, of your heart, read to me like the letters of women. Truthful? yes, but hysterically. Very wonderful to me is it to read that somebody taught you a doctrine while you were walking over some meadow ; or that

you were powerfully moved by a word of Saint Augustine's, quoted by Cardinal Wiseman—" *Securus judicat orbis terrarum.*" It points to a universal consent in the use of intellectual symbols (and words are nothing more) which never did exist, never will exist, never can exist. But whatever it points to, it is only a proposition without any authority except what it can get for itself out of some process of argument.

My use of the word proposition reminds me of what you say about dogma. You cannot conceive of a religion without dogma. Very good. I cannot conceive of the religious sentiment without an implicit proposition. And I cannot conceive of the religious sentiment embodying itself among imperfect creatures without explicit dogma. But I am asked, is this doctrine final and authoritative? is religious truth authoritative?* And I answer, No. It is nonsense to talk of authoritative truth. I am bound to conform myself to the truth, when I know it; but all the sophistry in the world cannot construct an obligation to believe.

But, can I not, by misconduct, injure my soul, and obscure the action of the organs of belief? Undoubtedly, and, for whatever wrong I do in that way I

* "Defence of the Eclipse of Faith," 4th edition.

shall be punished. Plain it is, awfully plain, that it is my duty to *consider* the liability under which an erring sinful creature lies in this respect. Let me be solemnly cautious in deciding upon all vital questions, *lest* I should have, by my own sin, dulled my own vision ! All that is most useful to be said ; but it is not useful, it is only dastardly, to try and confuse my mind by dwelling upon it. Whether my opinion is wrong or not ; whether I have got at it by being wicked or not ; let me be as “judicially blind” as you please,—still I can only act (if I am compelled to act) upon the opinion I have—not upon the opinion that I *ought* to have. Unquestionably, my character and conduct may alter my mind, so that I may be predisposed to particular errors ; indeed, my liver, or the state of the weather, or the accident of being tired with walking, may modify my opinions. But, even though my opinion at eight o’clock tonight should, through my own fault or misfortune, partly contradict my opinion at eight this morning, and also the opinion of the whole world besides (*securus judicat, &c., &c.*) I am bound to act upon it, if I must act at all. Of course, however, I should prefer inaction.

But, after all, what is the foundation of all this confusing talk ? Oh, monstrous perversion of a simple and most sacred truth ! If, at any time, I do, say, or

try to think, the thing of whose rightness I am not assured, then, and then only do I run the risk of damaging my organ of belief,—in other words, of darkening my conscience. And this is the argument which is flaunted in my face to *make* me darken my conscience! Oh, sirs, the phrase “authoritative truth,” “authoritative religion,” is an insult, as well as an absurdity!

You may give me two reasons for submitting, and two only:—

1. You must.
2. You ought.

The second reason creates religion. The first makes it impossible. Every scheme which *ultimately* takes shelter in force is irreligious. You bring me a “religion,” and say it is from a god. I answer that it contains things which are morally incredible. You immediately run to your hole, and point your big guns of horrible dilemma at me:—“You had better accept it. What can you do? Our god crunches up whole cities with earthquakes, and tortures babies a good deal, and he is evidently capable of making you miserable for ever; so you really have no alternative.” Now, what do you suppose is my reply? I deny the

force of your argument from analogy;* but if you could establish it ever so firmly, you have not made out a religion. I appeal, sir, from your Titan to the God who will chain him. You have made out a very strong being, of very equivocal attributes ; but you have not yet shown me cause to worship.

It is here that your argument, from the horrible amount of evil there is in the world, breaks down. You say that nothing, not even this horror, makes you disbelieve in God ; and I sympathise with you so far. But when you proceed to infer a “scheme” which makes the horror ten times more horrible, you forsake the indications of your own thought. If God reveals anything to me, it cannot be a revelation that the Evil will be everlasting ;—which only deifies the Devil. GOD is conquering goodness. A being who carries on the happiness and the suffering, in everlasting lines, presents to the mind simply an aggravated continuation of the thing which shocks you. What follows ? Why, you must still believe in GOD. Otherwise, I maintain that the extremest hypothesis of scepticism is preferable to your scheme. Let doubt do its worst—it cannot push us lower than this :—“There may be a

* See Letter to Mr Mansel.

God. There may be an immortality. The world has been ‘developing’ from wild beast to savage man, and from savage man to civilised man : there is no telling what it *may* develop to. Let us all make the best of it : and if, when we die, we drop off to final sleep, no *harm* is done.” Ignoble and dreary as this is, it is not only preferable, it is just *infinitely* preferable to a scheme, Catholic or Protestant, in which one single creature should be miserable for ever. If I had a thousand children, I would *infinitely* rather they all died outright than that 999 should be everlastinglly happy and good and the other one everlastinglly wicked and suffering.

Let me not be supposed to mean that I think an Epicurean thinker is better than a Romanist or a Calvinist. The latter, *from that poverty of imagination which almost always accompanies the dogmatic tendency*, cannot be said to know *what* he believes. The average mind, —*average I mean in character, whatever its power or degree*,—may be made to stick fast in any mudbank of verbal logic, simply because it does not conceive vividly. So the Calvinist or Romanist is probably an indefinitely better man than the Epicurean, and will do a better work in the world ; but his *hypothesis* takes away the *ratio* of all goodness as much more decidedly as a false-

hood is worse than a doubt. He clings fast to the idea of a moral order, and it is a noble clinging. That idea the Epicurean is in danger of losing ; but, on the other hand, he does not, in seeking to make it efficient, entangle it in an objective *reductio ad absurdum*, as the other does—that kind of *reductio ad absurdum* which was in the mind of Bacon, when he said superstition was worse than atheism ; it was better to have no opinion at all of God than one that was unworthy of him—“ I would rather men said there was no such person as Plutarch than that there was one Plutarch, which did eat his children as soon as they were born.”

As to the depravity of human nature, the corruption of the understanding, and the necessity of an infallible authority to act as a *remora*, or break, or drag, upon the analytic intellect,—I will observe, to begin with, that “ the depravity of human nature,” is a phrase of systematic theology, which may stand for a fact or a falsehood, just according to circumstances. I believe it generally stands for a downright absurdity. The depravity of human nature ! But what, then, is *human nature*? It is surely an abstraction. There is some wickedness in me, there is some in you ; there is a good deal in C D E, and all round the globe in F to Z. I

have no difficulty in admitting this ; or in allowing that there are cases, and alas ! many cases, of wickedness so desperate, as to be covered by no phraseology weaker than that of Jer. xvii. 9, and Ps. li. 5. Only what then ? Unless there is more goodness than badness in the world, it is idle to talk about either religion or morals. Unless the presumption from the facts is in favour of a Predominating Goodness, there is not a hairsbreadth of logical standing ground on which to plant the foot in looking for a God. In such a case it is pure nonsense to talk of "revelation,"—you cannot pretend to suggest a *word* of God, spoken or written until you have first got your God. It is, then, the mere *suicide* of religion to pretend that the Supreme Authority has told me, somewhere or other, that my nature is so depraved that it is not to be trusted in its decisions. Why, I have *nothing else to trust to*, come what may. Turn it round as you please, to this it comes at last. My human nature, just as it is, is final arbiter—of everything. It may be assisted by God ; I devoutly believe it is ; but it is simply ridiculous for any power on earth to pretend that it has a commission to control it, or put it down, or limit it, or call upon it to consent, or profess to consent, to what it does not approve. This is making the stream ascend

so high as to overtop its fountain. It is to forget that in probabilities which are sequential the chain grows weaker at every link, not stronger. It is highly probable that there is a good Being at the head of this world's affairs ; it is highly probable that this Being has spoken to man ; and thus, step by step, you bring me to the proposition,—it is highly probable that a particular theological corporation, which you trust as your Church, is commissioned to govern my creed, and make fresh propositions for me to accept. Very good—but the last probability is indefinitely weaker than the first, and yet the *intrinsic* improbability of what you ask us to receive as true, grows heavier and heavier at every step. But this is bringing the centre of gravity outside of the base ; and it is not the triumph of dogma, but the slaughter of trust, whether Protestant or Catholic performs the deed for me.

The idea of a final, infallible arbiter or authority upon points of doctrine is, I confess, one which, to my mind, carries with it no available meaning. For absolute truth, truth which is given in consciousness, we need no authority ; nor could any be given. But what am I to make of an infallible authority for probable truth ? That Christianity is true is, on all hands, and most distinctly on yours, admitted to be only a high

probability,—call it, if you like, a “certitude.” And then you come and talk to me of an infallible Church to dictate Christian doctrine! Here, again, we have the line of the centre of gravity falling outside of the base. I knew that the same difficulty may be found to press, in another shape, upon certain Protestants, and a good many of them too. Let them answer it,—if they can, first of all, *see* it. But, in the meanwhile, no Protestant has ever been preposterous enough to demand my consent to a doctrine like the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, on the “infallible” dictum of an authority, the very warrant of whose existence is only a probability. Once admit the “infallibility,” and I agree with you that “a thousand difficulties do not make one doubt;” because the proposition, whatever it may be, is on the footing of a necessary or absolute conclusion; but, then, again, we have the old difficulty recurring; our centre of gravity falls without the base.

I do not say anything here of the difficulty of conceiving the right function of an infallible authority for dictating matters of fact. But, plainly, such a tremendous conception swallows up all others,—it takes up the whole of life in its arms, and makes anything and everything wrong or ridiculous at its pleasure. Here,

once more, is the old difficulty—the centre beyond the base.

Concretely, or historically, the same difficulty confronts us. Is the infallible authority to be in one or in two, or in how many? Wherever it is supposed to reside, it must justify itself to somebody's reason, in order to be accepted. In other words, the infallible thing must be decided to be so by the exercise of what is fallible. Again, and again, and for ever, the same difficulty! In vain do you talk of the Church, and the Church, and the Church, and “notes” or “signs” of the *true* Church—you can never push the matter any further than this,—the infallible set up by the fallible. And then, if any other given Fallible questions your Infallible, down you come upon him with the strong hand. Certainly, because you have no better resource; you *cannot* have, in the long run. I repeat it again and again, till the world ring with it,—you found yourself on Power, and use Love or Goodness only as a cat's-paw. I mean that is your logic, not your intent. No, not your intent—though I am well assured that the adherents of your Church consist mainly of extreme types of two classes—those who find obedience a pleasure in itself, apart from moral reasons, and those who find *compelling* to obey a plea-

sure in itself under the same dissociation. So far as I have come in contact with English Churchmen who have gone over to your communion, I have found them distinguished either by the repulsive characteristic of love of power, or by a characteristic that may be in its way repulsive too—the tendency to submit; which very soon degrades into grovelling, fawning, and falsehood. I have no hesitation whatever in putting this down; for it is true. But I am not flinging stones. Let him that is without sin cast the first. I criticise, but I do not dogmatise; and I am as ready to receive as to give. Every man has his proper gift of God; every man his own besetting sin: let none abuse his brother.

In another shape, namely, in that of the flexibility of language as the sign of thought, or, which is the same thing, the flexibility of thought as a thing to be signified,—the old difficulty returns upon the notion of dictated, infallible doctrine. It is nonsense, it is folly to tell me what to believe: because belief is a never-ending process of self-adjustment. I can, I certainly *shall* slide away from your dogma the very moment I have signed to it. Immaculate Conception, indeed! Infallible dogma, indeed! I challenge the whole logic of your Church to define the Immaculate Conception

in such terms that I cannot reduce it to lower! Make what dogmas you please, and light what faggots you choose to invest with terror your infallible dictation, I laugh it all to scorn. For belief is a perpetual adjustment of perpetually sliding planes to each other. All life, physical and spiritual, consists, by its very definition, in this perpetual readjustment. All the terror of the Unknown threatens me so long as I do *not* adjust my mind to the truth, whatever fresh face it shows me. External interference can lead to nothing but falsehood, and rests upon an *impliciter* which makes moral ideas, and of consequence, religious ideas impossible. Again, the line of gravity falls over the circumference of the base. The conclusion destroys the premiss. Your bridge gives way just as you reach the shore you seek, and into the waters you fall, without help or hope. The right claimed by your Church of silencing the Truth, which you think implies no immoral compulsion, does imply, in truth, a compulsion which cuts up morals by the root.

Nothing, then, nothing can save the life of your teaching, that the Infallibility of the Church is the divinely appointed *remora* or break for throwing back the immense aggressive energy of the human intellect.

This is only a roundabout way of saying that A, B, or C, or all of them confederated, may with divine warrant, command D, E, or F to stifle their convictions. It is false. Such a divine warrant is a pure impossibility, for the reasons already given. To discuss whether it has or not been furnished is to discuss whether or not a circular triangle is to be found in some corner or other of the universe. I have shown in another connexion, that the precise same warrant which would, if existing, entitle you to *silence* me would also entitle you to *kill* me.* I had no thought of you or your Church when I marked out that demonstration. But it is so; and the inevitable logic of your creed is persecution unto death, and, after death, perdition for false opinions.

As a matter of fact, however, taking up the matter retrospectively or historically, instead of ethically, religious corporations, or their agents, *have*, whatever their creed, abundantly shown that such a *remora* or break to repel the energy of the analytic human intellect does in reality exist, and acts pretty uniformly. The men of science and the men of theology have, in the past, stood

* See letter to Mr John Stuart Mill.

in almost uniform antagonism to each other. How many improvements, *of which the men of theology have been ready enough to take advantage when the time came*, have been audaciously and cruelly denounced by them when first propounded! Of the tremendous amount of human suffering which this involves you seem to make very light. The Church “tacitly reedes,” and we get the improvement after all; that is your answer. Yes, we get it, but at what a cost! How many bruised consciences! how many broken hearts! how many faiths shipwrecked! While you, the Church, heating your tearing-irons cold-bloodedly, have saved your dogma for a few more years, the *real* faith, the trust in an Unseen Goodness which guarded Truth, and fought for innocent intent, has gone moaning and shivering down into the pit of doubt. Flourishing her bloody sword, the blind, brute Power marches on with her flag of Dogma, tearing to pieces the bodies, and crushing with insolence the souls of all who stand in her way with whatever seems to her to threaten the dogma. By and by, when she can no longer help herself,—when the banner of her precious “dogma” would be wrenched from her cruel talons, if she did not soon lower it, she “tacitly reedes from her injunction”—*alma mater!*—walking back to her place

over the dead bodies of the slain, and smiling a snaky smile as she overhears the muttered curses of the living.

You are candid to excess in avowing, throughout your "Apologia," your hatred of (what you call) Liberalism. I do not scruple to avow my hatred of (what I call) Despotism. Looked at from *my* point of view, the world is centuries behind what it might have been, if it had not been for the efforts made by your Church to "smite back the immense aggressive energy of the human intellect" in men like Pascal and Fénelon. I *cannot* think calmly of it. I cannot write of it without words such as your printer's reader, as you inform us, queried in the margin of your own manuscript.

I hold that the "aggressive energy of the human intellect" is no business of yours. Its function is determined for it by the Highest Power. So is the function of the Religious Emotions. There can be no collision between Religion and Science, so long as they keep in their own proper places. The moment, however, that Science dictates *action* to Religion, or Religion attempts to become scientific in *expression*, (*i.e.*, sets up authoritative doctrine,) that moment conflict begins.

Undoubtedly, the tendency of the analytic mind is to question dogma of all kinds. Undoubtedly the *passing* result of that tendency must be negative. But that result endures only so long as the new formula remains unfound ; and nothing is involved in it but the suspense of conviction. That is a necessity of the search after truth in imperfect natures ; and the work of the “aggressive intellect” is as essential as that of the emotions which tend to adhere to foregone conclusions. That adherence, pushed beyond certain limits, indeterminable to the human mind, but known to God, eventuates in corruption, torpor, and death. But while there is life there is hope. *And all life is differentiation.*

Practically, human creatures being so imperfect, science and religion do pursue very different paths. Religion, seeing all things in God, reverences the lowest as well as the highest, and goes about seeking and healing, contriving and mending, soothing, softening, and palliating. Hence her hospitals, her asylums, her sanctuaries. Science, on the other hand, knows nothing of contriving, and her business with sickness is, not to build the hospital or the asylum, but to study the disease, and, if she can, to extirpate it. Whatever comes before her that is wrong, her instinctive thought

is, not how to palliate or mend it, but how, by a scrutiny of the laws which control the conditions, to destroy the evil, and prevent it.

It has been, and still is, made a constant subject of reproach to the “aggressive intellect,” running, as it often does, in channels of doubt,—that it never does anything for humanity. Who is it that builds the churches, and the schools, and the lazar-houses, and carries the lamp of hope to the children of darkness and squalor? The question is a fair one, and I answer, —Mainly, these things are the work of pious, unscientific, and even rather unthoughtful, men and women. Sometimes, however, the mere man of science takes his turn to help, sometimes even the infidel. The cause of education, and the cause of care for the poor, and the cause of criminal reform, are all under obligations to the late Robert Owen, such as can scarcely be measured. It was he, too, a pure atheist, who did more than any man of his time to make popular that notion of *co-operative* industry in which wise men of all classes now see so much hope for the future of England and the world. In his *indirect* influence upon our social condition Robert Owen was, I believe, a very distinguished benefactor. The work of his life was done when I was a child, or be-

fore I was born. I never saw him, and could have no sympathy with his scheme of the universe. But what I now say is notoriously true, and to part of it I was, indeed, guided by the opinions of wiser and better men than I, and men, too, whose opinions as Christians approximate more closely to the colour and tone of yours than do mine.

Again : a great though obvious error is committed when it is presumed, explicitly or implicitly, that the work of the “aggressive” intellect is confined to such operations or activities as take even remotely the form of attack, suspicion, or even reticence. Your Church is perfectly right upon its own hypothesis, in stretching out the arms of its authority, to silence and repel, far beyond the boundaries of theology and morals. What sort of “intellect” do you suppose it was that invented gas, the steam-engine, the suspension-bridge? that repealed the corn-laws? *that emancipated Roman Catholics?* Oh, reverend sir, it was the “aggressive” intellect that did all these things! The scientific, the analytic, the “liberal” mind! The mind that doesn’t care one jot about religion, so long as it is left to its own devices, and that yet *may* be won to faith and trust!

Every advance made by man upon nature,—every

fresh resource conquered from material difficulties,—is (for the time, and until the outer margin again widens) a lessening of his feeling of dependence, and is so far irreligious. What your “smiting” Church must really engage to do, then, under the shelter of the commission she calls divine, is, to smite back *everything* but her own “dogmas.” So that the bare statement of her claim is its all-sufficing *reductio ad absurdum*.

I have already said, and I repeat, in fairness, that a large portion of this letter might just as appropriately be addressed to Protestants of a certain school as to yourself, if it were not that you and your Church are logical in the deduction of your whole scheme from your initial postulate, and, to use a coarse phrase, stick at nothing. Protestantism sets up a “right of private judgment ;” and if that right be justly interpreted, the Truth of God has all it claims. But in the majority of minds it is not so interpreted ; it cannot be so interpreted by anybody who talks about authoritative truth ; in his hands it becomes merely a “*remora or break*” set up against the persecuting tendency which is so strong in the average human being ; it is

thus a compromise, and not a principle. Your Church however, disdains this compromise, and builds up her bloody logic with an unrelaxing hand. To that Church, then, may properly be addressed the argument against the possibility of erecting a *religion* upon the basis of *power*. In such an edifice, which you may *call* a religion, there may indeed be *rest*,—the rest of security,—but it is such a security as that of the Indian Begum, who had her bed placed over the chamber in which her victim was groaning herself to death in agonies of hell. For me, no such rest! Welcome rather lightning, and wind, and rain! the wildest heath, the maddest storm! If the “*rest*” which is offered to me implies that one single creature shall for ever suffer and sin, then I prefer the silence of the grave to the loudest happiness of the brightest life. It were better to be the Begum’s victim, than to sympathise with the Begum,—because I didn’t see my way out of it,—because “a thousand difficulties do not make one doubt,”—because I had better “bow,” and “submit,” and remember that *le plus sûr est de croire*. That is the rest of acquiescent fiend-worship. It is looking the Devil in the face and saying, “You are a great Mystery; but there’s a deal to be said for you in

the way of analogy ; on the whole, you have the best of it, so I may as well call you God, and get some peace.” I defy you, I defy the whole doctorhood of your Church and all Churches to find any definition of God but Conquering Goodness. If it really appears, —if it be proved, by any means whatever,—that this world of ours is under the government of an equivocal being, who will finally be baffled by evil, then the question is, not Shall I be Romanist or Protestant? but Shall I hang myself or drown myself? Or if, unhappily, I have surrounded my life by beings that I love, and towards whom I have incurred obligations, it remains to suggest that the whole human race should take good care that the present generation is the last that shall be born upon a planet which, feeling after God, if haply it may find him, has lost its labour, and spins orphaned through space and time, to an ending which, at its very best, is so infinitely terrible, that it were better that world had never been born.

But, sir, we have a better teaching. “After this manner pray ye :—Our Father which art in heaven. . . . thy kingdom come!”—And come it will. “Then cometh the End,” . . . when this intermediate “kingdom” of Vicarious life, whose symbol is

the Cross, shall be “delivered up to God, even the Father;” when He shall make all things new; when Death and Hell, the phantoms which you call eternal, shall be cast into the lake of fire, (for our God is a consuming fire,) and God shall be all in all.

H. H.

TO

G. H. LEWES, Esq.

SO frank, and yet so wisely guarded ; so bold and yet ever so just ; so resolved in seeking to follow a free logic to its very last issues, and yet so strenuous in asserting that intellect is not the lord of life ; so earnest in disclaiming any attempt to *force* one secret of truth from the mystery of the universe ; and yet so ready to turn an ear of affection to any sublime or beautiful whisper that floats in the atmosphere of life, lingers in a poet's harp, or is caught in the snares of experiment ;—since you are all this, it is not an easy thing for a solitary at his desk to fix your teaching in such an attitude that he can regard it justly for controversial purposes. One thing is certain,—that you maintain the impossibility of crossing over from Psychology to Ontology except by pure “air-galloping,”—there being, you think, no legitimate bridge for the transit. But it would be unfair not to observe that great thinkers, who are so far one with you, find means, nevertheless, to believe in a great deal that they

might be supposed to reject. Wonderful, indeed, is the human mind, for its hospitality and inhospitality, both. One man says Ontology is impossible, and believes in Moral Supernaturalism* and Physical Miracle too. Another asserts that Ontology is possible, and rejects Physical Miracle altogether. A third believes in the objective nature of the infinite ideas, and also in miracle of both kinds.

I am anxious to do no one any injustice, in the way of either assuming that he believes a particular thing at all ; or that he wishes his confession of faith to be considered as final, and past revision. Sometimes, one is set free from any fear of *these* kinds. I may blunder in trying to catch Mr Mill's arguments, or in trying to answer them : but there is no doubt he insists upon the utilitarian philosophy ; there is no chance that he will ever revise his opinions in that respect. Mr Mansel, again, I may mistake, in the detail of what he writes ; but clearly he will have nothing to say to the " Absolute ;" and I should as soon expect the sun to drop from heaven as to find him changing. With you, however, I could not feel so sure of my ground ; for there is a manifest *history* in your books, and the play of

* I employ this awkward phrase to denote the creed of thinkers like the Rev. James Martineau.

emotional light and shade over their logic is greatly more rapid than in the majority of controversial writers. Still, I can have no difficulty in saying, with your "Biographical History of Philosophy" before me, that you turn your back on "metaphysics,"—except as psychology with a physiological basis,—that you wont have anything to say to "necessary ideas,"—and that you turn with avowed devotion to science, now that "philosophy has," as you tell us, "everywhere in Europe fallen into discredit." So that I can scarcely do you injustice (in the way of attributing to you any broad argument which you would disclaim) if, in dealing with your teaching that a speculative justification of human trust is not to be reached by the "philosophic" path, wherever else it is to be sought, I guard,—not as against you, in whose teaching it is not found,—the inference which others seem too ready to draw, that Science *alters* the grounds of trust, or arrests the search.

Let me observe, before passing on, that the main question to be discussed is indebted to you, as it is indebted to perhaps no other living writer, for the transparent clearness of the atmosphere of style in which it has been presented to the mind of the student. Also,

I do not understand why such writing, as that of which your "Biographical History of Philosophy" is chiefly made up, should be called "criticism." The form of the matter is "critical" even in what may be called a literary sense; because you expound and comment upon the text of others; but your own contributions to the current of the subject are as distinct, as individual as theirs, and might, in their turn, become subjects, considered as positive contributions, of the criticism of others. I often see this distinction drawn, but cannot see the good of it. All philosophy is criticism, from whatever point of view written. It is a criticism of the universe, and if a man finds it convenient to make *his* criticism in the form of an essay on Kant, nothing is gained by calling him a critic, as distinguished from a philosopher.

I may now venture to draw my own lines of comment a little closer by remarking here that, in like manner, I do not see much use in drawing distinctions between "psychology" and "ontology," and so on. One understands them, and they are sometimes convenient, perhaps; but it occurred to me, very early indeed, in life, that the whole task to be done, whatever it is, must be homogeneous, must demand one method. All such

words as “spirit” and “matter” may, for me, go to limbo,—liable to be fetched when wanted, but slaves, not masters of thought. Strictly speaking, then, except as terms of convenience, both “metaphysics” and “psychology” might, in my view, be dispensed with. There is one science, and its name is the Science of Being, or Ontology. This is the only “positivism” I can make anything of.

Of that with which your name has been connected in England, and, I suppose, on the continent, I can make nothing whatever, but a system of classification. So far as it assumes,—to save discussion, I will say, *if* it assumes,—to be a balance-sheet of the universe, it seems to me to be forged. That the Theological Method, the Metaphysical Method, and the Positive Method are developments,—stages in human progress,—I do boldly and entirely deny. The three methods must co-exist, do co-exist, will co-exist for ever. You may shut out two of them *by name*; but you do a quite arbitrary thing; and you have no more put an end to them than you have extinguished a man by slamming the door in his face, and telling him that he will knock in vain, for you propose to consider him as non-existent. I take the whole of this “positive” business, so far as it is exclusory, to be a pure

self-delusion. The essential condition of that delusion is, probably, that of a sheltering civilization. Take that away, and, in the presence of the great passions roused to storm and stress, or in the presence of the more constant forms of nature, I believe the “theological stage” would rapidly return upon the mind in the shape of superstition, and compel the restatement of the whole case. I do not believe anything is gained, no, not one scrap of truth, by parting with “final causes,” or “special providence.” In plain truth, they *cannot* be parted with. It is on all hands agreed, (it is too obvious to be disputed,) and very clearly put by you among others, that induction cannot proceed without temporary hypothesis. Now, this temporary hypothesis is simply a backward reading of the theory of final causes, and *implies* the forward reading. You may kick away the ladder when you have mounted by using your legs, but the ladder *was there*, and you will want it again, for the next stage. The mistake of the old-world student of nature was, that he jumped to any conclusion, *instead* of walking straight. The mistake of the modern student is, that because he walks to his conclusion, up his ladder of hypothesis, the hypothesis meant nothing, and *was* nothing. So much for science. As to morals, this is the dilemma.

Either all is mere natural history, or there is an $\eta\theta\eta$ in things. There is, or there is not. If there is, it is impossible for me to tell whether it is active in each separate thing, for each separate event, or whether it acts by general laws, without such specific activity. Nor does it in the least matter. The effective conclusion is, that it is operative by general laws in each particular. This conclusion lies in the same line with that of the rudest form in which special providence was ever conceived. But, then, the added conception of *general law* redeems the application of the truth in any particular case from egotism. Hence the later formula, though in the same line with the fetichistic formula, is on a higher level. Excluding the egotism, however, the case is just the same as if we fancied a god interfering; as that of any Jove stooping from his cloud in a fable-book.

Here, if I understand aright, positivism comes up and says, "I perceive you are still in the metaphysical stage. I reject the *deus e machina*, and, in part, you go with me. That is well; but you are, as yet, only half a disciple, for I reject the *principle* as well."

Very good, I reply; you may reject *in words* as long as you please, but reject in deeds you never can; and

here, again, we delude ourselves. I come back to the old dilemma. Is there, or is there not, anything more in the universe than Natural History, or the cataloguing and describing of (so-called) natural facts? Is there, or is there not, an indiscerptible *residuum* which defies analysis; whose very *differentia* it is, that it must defy analysis, because it for ever controls the rest?

I maintain that there is. It is implied in the words, Right, Wrong. A million times have I shut the door upon my thoughts, and tested this question. But I cannot destroy the conclusion: dodge it I may, wittingly or unwittingly; but that is all. Vain is it to decompose this $\eta\theta\eta$ into the more or less of pleasure, so long as the question of preponderant tendency in things waits an answer. That question is assumed in the fact, that we prefer pleasure to pain, for others as well as ourselves, for others in disregard of ourselves. Every attempt to analyse this last preference breaks down ignominiously and grotesquely. It *is*—it is a fact—and it establishes the existence of an $\eta\theta\eta$ in things. Nothing is gained by calling it a “law.” Nothing is gained by those who, thinking that too anthropomorphic, prefer the word “method.” Nothing is gained by talking of an Unseen Goodness, instead of saying God,

though there are, undoubtedly, moods of the highly cultivated mind in which the former mode of expression may be found preferable. I do not quarrel with that, or with anything else that is truthful.

But certain it is that there are thousands of people who read such assertions as we are accustomed to hear, in modern times, of the limits of scientific knowledge, as so many denials of the grounds of trust. Doubtless they are emboldened to do this by the form in which the certainties of "science" are displayed, (I do not use that word offensively,) as against the uncertainties of "metaphysics." And I do think an error lies in this way of exhibiting the case.

It really matters so little on what particular spot of ground in the field the battle is fought, that the question of the *vis medicatrix naturae* will do as well as any other.

You repudiate the idea as belonging to the metaphysical stage of human movement,—I do not say progress, because if "philosophy" is impossible, the word has no business in our vocabulary,—no, not in any sense, "metaphysical," "anthropomorphic," or other. I understand you to deny that there is in nature any curative tendency whatever. Nature, you insist, elaborates a cancer as impartially as she does a rose.

When the cancer appears upon a beautiful bosom, nature has no intention to heal it, which intention art can assist. Her intention (if she had one) is to bring her cancer to perfection, whatever becomes of the beautiful bosom. And so in every similar case. If disease lies in her path, nature intends disease. The *vis medicatrix* is a misleading fancy, and no more.

That is what you maintain. I, on the other hand, believe that the phrase *vis medicatrix naturæ* is a metaphysical periphrasis which does really cover a hard, scarcely disputable fact. I gladly resign to you the phrase. I resign to you also the admission, (which you need not fight long to obtain from any reasonable man,) that the idea of a curative tendency in nature must be pernicious and misleading, so long as it is treated as *something occult to which there are no scientific methods of appeal*. But I maintain that something exists,—a law, a method, or what you please, which that notion may honestly stand for, and to which there *are* scientific means of appeal.

You admit that the function of the physician, or the physiological discoverer, is a legitimate one. Then let me ask you, pain and pleasure being both facts, which of them is normal? Is pain normal? is pleasure normal? or is normal a word totally devoid of mean-

ing? To be consistent with yourself, you must maintain the last, or third alternative. *Do* you maintain that?

You will scarcely assert, I suppose, that pain is normal; *i.e.*, that upon a large induction, it appears that there is more pain than pleasure in the universe; that nature *prefers* cancers to roses and beautiful bosoms; that (which is implied in that view) pain is an ever-increasing quantity in the scheme of things.

Nor do I conceive your opinion to be, that pain and pleasure are balanced in the world, there being about as much of one as the other—which would be one way of saying that normal is a word without meaning. No; you assert that (for I feel that you *must* assert that) in *another* way: namely, by insisting that we have nothing to do but to observe, interrogate, and register the facts; draw our conclusions; and endeavour to turn nature from her path of pain when that *is* her path. That, you affirm, is the business of human science, directed by human good will.

Be it so. What is that, I pray you, but another way of allowing that pleasure, or health, is normal? The effort to remove the pain is, surely, a protest against its existence, which admits the whole case against yourself, (which admits, indeed, enough to overturn a good

many orthodox schemes of the universe.) You cannot suppress this protest ; you do not pretend to do so ; the cry of a living creature in pain is a form of it ; the function of the physician is a practical embodiment of it. All this means, distinctly, *pain is wrong and must be removed*. The mere fact that it exists, and makes that meaning understood by a thousand voices and a thousand activities, is proof that the human mind has made for itself, backed by unanswerable induction, the generalisation—there is more pleasure than pain, and it is the larger quantity which is also the increasing one. In other words, pleasure, or health, is normal.

If you were to cut your finger to-morrow in dissecting a triton, you would proceed upon the hypothesis that a whole finger was the rule, and a wounded one the exception—and you would, most likely, expect the cut to heal. If you saw a cancer festering in the bosom of a lovely woman you would, assuredly, feel that the cancer had no business there, and that its presence, whether it was curable or not, was an exceptional and very mournful thing. You would certainly not affirm that nature had any *malignant* intention,—that she proposed to herself the cultivation of the cancer with the design of overrunning and destroying the busts of half the race.

No, you say,—you deny that nature has *any* intention. Nature produces the rose, and she produces the dodder that spoils the rose. Pleasure and pain both lie, at different times, in her path, and she is indifferent which it is.

But I deny the indifference. And your course of action when you cut your finger justifies my denial—for you will act, as every living creature acts, when necessary, upon the instinctive generalisation that pain is an abnormal thing, not intended to be permanent.

I confess, turning the subject all ways, I do not see how we can get out of this. What then, (if I am right,) does this quarrel with the *vis medicatrix naturæ* amount to? To a verbal criticism, and nothing more. “Nature is not a person ; and has not a will of her own ; to attribute one to her is a mere anthropomorphism.” Very good ; you are welcome to so much. Bear away your spoil, and make us your debtors, if you like, for the cautionary addition to your criticism, that what is called the curative tendency in nature is not to be superstitiously trusted, but is a thing to be scientifically interrogated and appealed to. So far is well, and I understand you. I understand, too, the consistent fatalism of the Turk who fearlessly drives a train to meet

another which he knows is coming up the line, saying, “If it is the will of Allah to smash me, I shall be smashed.” But I do *not* understand the philosophy which says there is no preponderance of beneficent probability in the universe, (which is a fair translation of this denial of the *vis medicatrix naturæ*,) and then proceeds to act as if there were.

A preponderance of beneficent probability in the universe.—What, indeed, is all effective pursuit of truth, science, but an assumption that there is, in fact, such a preponderance? What is it, in its most naked, unmetaphysical form, but the pursuit of laws or methods, in obedience to which lies the demonstrable happiness or security of the human race? I need not, in this place, press the question, What is gained by substituting the providence of an idea (law or method) for the providence of a person, (Nature = Deity;) because one’s opponent would retort that the question must be, not what is gained, or gainable, but what *is*. And I admit it. But I would venture to urge that the too rigorous resolve to escape from anthropomorphism may land the intelligence in an absolutely barren pedantry. There *must* be anthropomorphism in all really significant or living speech, just because it is man that in-

vents and uses it. How should man escape man-similitude of phrase? He may try. Some *have* tried. Some object even to the word "law," as quasi-metaphysical, and then prefer the word "method." But why is not one as metaphysical as the other? How do you escape, in your own mind, attributing quasi-personality to nature? You *cannot* escape it—do not escape it—only you relegate that kind of thing to the region of "poetry," Well, what is poetry? It is the inevitable obverse of science. The idea of personality is the inevitable obverse of the idea of law; and you can only escape it by wilfully (by which I mean, simply, of choice) looking at one side of the medal only.

What, I think, prevents your seeing that Positivism is as much a scheme of metaphysics as Hegelianism, or Schellingism, or Kantism, or the Acosmism of Berkeley, is simply the fact that it is at present on the attacking side, so far as its fundamental ideas are concerned. Of course its method, or classification, is capable of standing alone. But as a scheme of things it is most distinctly a metaphysic, and, when attacked, must take shelter for its life under translated forms of the very ideas, which are, by its implications, indemonstrable.

I think that Duty, except as Convenience, is inad-

missible upon any “positive” basis of thought; and this, although the moral teaching of positivists is higher than that of some orthodox thinkers known to me. Certainly, the social code of Comte, as sketched in his later writings, is not open to objection on the score of laxity. It is admitted to be incomparably severe. Its treatment of all questions which relate to women is, I should think, unexampled both in principle and in detail. Including an absolute and final monogamy, which would have satisfied Whiston or Dr Primrose, it also includes a great deal more which would have staggered either of them. Mr Mill has pointed out that the moral danger from the positivist code of ethics is not that of licence, but of tyranny. Nor need it be insisted *here*, that no truth can have consequences which are, in any ultimate sense, immoral, though truth may require the breaking of received rules, (*mores*, manners, or customs.) Every truth must stand upon its own merits; and yet no truth can be contradictory to any other truth. Thus, if Positivism be attacked for immoral consequences said to be foreseen, it is quite fair for Positivism to reply—“Your objection is idle and premature. What is true must of necessity be good. The only thing is, what *is* true? It will, when demonstrated, be

found quite reconcilable with moral and all other truth."

But as I can see nothing but classification in Positivism, I see in it no justification of moral truth. If a man draws out a plan for the water-supply of London, and an opponent of his scheme objects that it will drain the Thames dry, the man may justly make answer (according to circumstances) either—"It will do nothing of the kind;" or, again—"Your Thames must take care of itself, like my waterworks." That is intelligible enough. But if a man makes out such a plan of London that there is no room for a river running east and west,—such a plan that the Thames becomes, *ex hypothesi*, impossible as a fact,—then another answer becomes fair. I am then entitled to say:—"No, your plan of London must be wrong; for I have *seen* the Thames, which your *logic* leaves no room for."

One of your favourite topics (when the impossibility of philosophy is the theme) is what you call the incessant linear progress of science as contrasted with the circular movement of philosophy. I have no objection to this statement of the case, considered as a metaphor, but we must guard the inference. Practically, if it be

impossible (as it, of course, is) that science, in its “linear progress,” should ever arrive at the end of its line, if there be (as, of course, there is) an infinity before it as well as behind it, it is not easy to perceive what advantage science, which can never come to an end, has over philosophy, which is, you say, always detained within the same circle. But let that pass.

It is no doubt true that the movement of philosophy is circular,—a movement always detained round the same centre, (though not upon the same plane,) year after year, age after age, for ever. Necessarily so, because the objects of philosophic contemplation are themselves fixed or absolute, and objects of affection and reverence. Human nature may be pretty indifferent to the corpuscular theory of light, and, in its linear progress, may leave it far behind; but it can never get away from (the ideas which it calls) God and Immortality. Its movement around the absolute idea is, of necessity, circular; but it is, also from the necessity of the case, circular with incessant change of plane; in other words, it is spiral. Nothing can be more startling than the assertion that from Thales and “the Physicists” to Immanuel Kant there is no progress,—in movement upwards around the same centre; movement in re-starting and re-answering the problems.

In what respect, however, is science, which can never get to the end of its horizontal line, superior to philosophy, which can never get to the top of its vertical spiral?

I believe the notion of this superiority of science to be altogether an illusion, resulting from resolute determination of the faculties to the tangible. Certainly, a plain man, coming fresh to the discussion, would not be likely to believe that science was superior to philosophy in point of certainty. Granted that linear progress may mean addition, it also means correction ; and, as a simple matter of fact, the science of yesterday *is* wiped out, like footprints on sand, by the science of to-day. Take up, my plain-thinking friend, almost any scientific book you please that has been recently edited, and tell me what sort of proportion the notes or corrections bear to the original mass of matter. Ten years ago a function was assumed for the cerebellum, which is now, I find, denied to it. Ten years ago, alcohol was not food. Now it *is* food, if I may trust some pundits. Well, I do not want to make any unfair or illogical use of facts like these. I am not seeking to undermine any of the grounds of human certitude,—on the contrary, I seek to affirm them all. But I again ask to be

informed in what respect science, with an infinitely extended straight line before it, is superior to philosophy, moving upwards with incessant change of plane around a fixed centre. Will anybody undertake to say on which side there would be the greatest amount of mutual understanding,—on the side of (say) a session composed of a priest of Osiris, Plato, Giordano Bruno, and Sir William Hamilton,—or on the side of (say) a session composed of Aristotle, Roger Bacon, Playfair, and Liebig? I confess I think it is utterly, hopelessly uncertain, which.

The repudiation of metaphysics is thus, to my thinking, utterly vain. It can, surely, only seem to mean anything so long as it stands apart, as a denial. Once attack it, put it on its defence, and it must itself, in the process of explanation, become, in its turn, a metaphysic. Why does it not recognise itself for one? Because it has not yet arrived at that stage in which the *terminology* of explanation is liable to be called in question for non-inclusiveness. But it soon will. Indeed, it *may* have already done so: it may be only very imperfect reading which permits me to make this statement.

I repeat I can only conceive as possible one science, the science of Being; of the things which *are*. A

scheme which does not take into account a controlling $\eta\theta\eta$ as a constant element (if you please, a disturbing element) seems to me purely arbitrary and false,—a forging of the balance-sheet, by the mere exclusion of a certain *quantitas*,—a mere hanging up of a curtain, and saying, “We don’t know what’s outside,” when the air you breathe is both within and without.

My own view is, that physical and metaphysical* science are exactly on the same footing. The condition of well-being, nay, the condition, in the end, of existence, is perpetual readjustment of one’s self to the thing which exists, as it is afresh discerned from time to time. Science is no more, and no less. Religion itself is no more and no less. Morality is no more and no less. It is all a form of veracity, and the world begins to crumble away from our touch if we refuse to follow the beckoning finger. But when is the beckoning finger overtaken? Never. It is as if one were building an hypaethric temple,—no roof, all walls. For ever science widens their base; for ever religion heightens their sides. For ever the zenith recedes; *for ever the horizon too.*

* The sense of accommodation in which such words are used has been already explained.

I do not think, then, that any superiority can be claimed for “science” over metaphysics: unless, indeed, a process of addition be superior to one of growth. I do not wish to press a figure of speech as finally representing a truth, but I should think that figure a fair one. To say, with even your “History” open before me, that there is no “advance” from “Thales and the Physicists” to Kant, from Plotinus to Schelling, is what I am really not equal to. There certainly appears to me to be a most tremendous advance in the *statement* of certain facts. The facts are not altered, nor the attitude of the mind with relation to the facts,—*it is of the essence of the case that these should not alter. That they do not change is the very basis of religion.* Nor does the quantity of force “conserved” in the universe change because a new planet is discovered, or a new alkaloid made, or a new light invented. You say, and truly in one sense, “To know more we must *be* more.” But that will not serve us. For, as we are constantly *becoming* more, we are, in fact, constantly knowing more. It is useless to say, we get no surer. We may in science add fact to fact, but we are never any surer of *anything*. All the certainties in the world added up together do not make anything fresh. Nor does that totally unmean-

ing phrase, "the laws of thought," take anything away from our means of certainty on any conceivable subject. What would be said if a man looked into a glass at his own face, described it accurately, and then "limited" it by calling the facts "laws?" It would not, to my mind, be such jargon as saying that since man exists in time and space, he can only think what is thinkable in time and space; therefore he cannot think the Boundless. I answer, he *does* think the Boundless, and he thinks it neither in time nor in space; for the thought is nowhere and nowhen. If anybody tells me that this is a mere verbal negation,* I say it is nothing of the kind. My idea is positive, and it is only because it cannot be compared, as stocks and stones can, that others do not so recognise it. Everything presents itself, *in words*, as "limited" by some other thing, but in thought it is not so. *Nor is there any argument which may be used to show that the Infinite cannot be proved to have an objective existence, that may not equally be turned so as to show that the Finite has no objective existence.*

I believe you will agree with that, and say, "Yes,

* Mr B. H. Smart, an exceedingly acute and able writer, has put that view of the subject very powerfully. But he has not *touched* my own perception upon the matter.

we can only know phenomena; we can never know things in themselves." My reply is, Be it so. There are phenomena and phenomena; and I can know the "infinite phenomenon" just as assuredly as the finite. I am aware of the technical absurdity of that phrase, and employ it with deliberate consciousness. For, if precisely the same arguments may be employed to make impossible the proof of the seen and the unseen, then both become phenomenal to logic.

We need not waste words about the mind perceiving Ideas of things, and not Things. At no time in my life did the talk of this kind which I found was usual among "metaphysicians" appear anything but idle. But the distinction between *noumenon* and *phenomenon* appears to me equally idle. Whatever I see and know I *do* see and know, and there is an end. Our senses deceive us no more than our reason. Arriving at certain knowledge is often a *process*, which has its risks, and that is all that can be said about it. With, I am persuaded, a clear understanding of every line written by Hume, and of the whole sceptical argument, I think that is so; if it is pushed further, I think there is "nothing in it." I do not wish to appear to be, for a moment, on the side of the "cox-combs who vanquish Berkeley with a grin;" but there

cannot be any formula but this:—Whatever thing I find in my consciousness exists. To ask if the thing is real, is only another way of asking if I am myself real, for Subject and Object cannot be disjoined except upon reflection. All this *noumena* and *phenomena* business is only trying to analyse perception. It is going back to question a first postulate which had to be in its place before one could think at all. It is the old story,—if we lock the door from without, we cannot leave the key inside.

If Appearance and Essence are to be distinguished, then we are constrained to ask, What is the essence of appearance *quoad* appearance? What is the noumenon of the phenomenon *quoad* phenomenon? And so on for ever.

Of the alleged uncertainty of our senses, I can make nothing intelligible. Least of all does it lie in the mouths of those who repudiate the metaphysical method as a bad one, to say anything about that uncertainty. The uncertainty of my *senses*? What, then, are my *senses* as distinguished from *me*? (this question being put to the positivist.) Here is Macbeth, looking at Banquo's ghost. “His senses deceive him.” Not a bit, say I, in the interest of science! Banquo's ghost is *there*. In some way or other, Macbeth's

brain has made it, or *it* has made itself real to Macbeth's brain, and to his brain only; by some "law" which we have yet to discover. Perhaps we may be as long in finding it out as we have been in learning that there are metals in the solar atmosphere. Is it answered, "Science knows nothing of perhapses; science dislikes indeterminate conclusions?" (which is what I have just read in a positivist essay,—not yours) I reply, science does nothing of the kind. Every hypothesis is an indeterminate conclusion, and the indeterminateness bears, necessarily, a precise proportion to the difficulty of the subject of inquiry.

"Banquo's ghost was the result of abnormal action of the nervous system of Macbeth."

Very good. I once read in an old scientific book that "the crowing of the cock affrighteth the lion, because it hath in it a quality of fear." It is not *you*, dear sir, who write or think in this way, and it is not in your mouth that I would be understood as putting any of the nonsense that may be set up to be knocked down in this letter. But I *do* think the word abnormal is fair game, when used by men of science. Why "abnormal," when "antecedently to experience one thing is" (said to be) "as probable as another?"

Abnormal, indeed! Then, if we may have this word

"abnormal," why not the word "miraculous?" Because there is no God, says the atheist. Because we do not know that there is a God, says the sceptic. Because we can *know* nothing but phenomena, or law, or method, says somebody else. And I return upon them all three with what has already been said,—namely, that we *do* know more than "phenomena" and "law" in this exclusive sense,—we know of an Inscrutable Moral Order; and that being granted, the word "abnormal" *may* cover all that was ever claimed by reasonable people under the word "miraculous." The question of historical probability in particular cases must remain open for discussion, of course.

But the proposition, that antecedently to experience one thing is as probable as another, must not be allowed to pass. It is not true. Nay, it is without meaning *for the purpose for which it is used*. Let us see.

Antecedently to any and all experience, it is ridiculous to say that anything is *anything*, or is at all; for experience begins with existence. To this same "experience" go two constituents—the consciousness, and the fact. Afterwards comes reflex action,—reflection. Now surely, this maxim cannot be intended merely to inform us that until a creature has had sensation No.

1, it cannot have sensation No. 2. It must begin before it can expect, but one can't mean *that?*—in truth *it does begin, it is*,—simultaneously with any outer fact that impresses it so as to make “experience.” And nobody can divide the share of *that* from the share of *this* in the first experience. One thing is clear, however,—*no creature expects pain—it expects to live, and tries to live*—and antecedently to experience there is a probability that it will,—upon which probability it acts. Experience, judged by reflection, confirms its expectation.

Why, says my essayist, this is nothing but “self-preservation the first law of nature—it's just life—it's the Mystery of Existence.”

Yes, it is the mystery of existence. But what is the mystery? Why, *the tendency to continue to exist in painlessly adjusted relations to other things*. It is idle to call this experience. Experimentally we recognise it, upon reflection. But it is, itself, the necessary postulate of experience, and it contains implicitly the inference of something probable.

Indeed, I could never see the force of the assertion, occurring more than once in your “Biographical History of Philosophy,” that the question upon which the possibility of philosophy turns is simply this—*Have*

we any ideas independent of experience? The answer is, No, certainly not : how should we ? This is another way of asking if we have any ideas independent of *existence*. Turn it round and round for ever, my own efforts can make no more of it.

Unless, indeed, it be understood as a question which admits of no answer. We are not here to revive the old nonsense about “ innate ideas”—though, perhaps, after all, it is harsh to denounce it ;—it may have been only a clumsy way of putting a possible truth. Just in the same way “ science” denounces “ vital force”—and yet can escape by no periphrasis whatever from the “ mystery of life.” Well, so long as the “ mystery of life” remains, and it *must* remain for ever, it will be impossible to say how much is contributed by the living Subject to that resultant of the two factors Subject and Object called experience. Nobody knows what is the precise consciousness of a baby. I have watched the movements of the child-intellect with incessant scrutiny, and will at least say this,—that it seems to me a great deal of nonsense has been talked about its “ development.” One thing is certain, that it brings with it into the world that *X*, whatever it is, that makes possible the whole subsequent history of intelligence. Talk to us about “ cells” for ever ; analyse the cell into a second

“cell” at a million removes; and what then? We have found out something which may be useful, but we have *explained* nothing. The case stands exactly as it did, under the conditions of the crudest physiology of the filthy East, with its brutal notions of woman and its loathsome “purifications;” or the crudest physiology of the middle ages, which permitted speculations as to the precise moment at which the “soul” entered its “tabernacle of flesh.”*

It is not needful for me here to repeat that I am not foolishly challenging the utility of science. Unless we readjust our conceptions of things as fast as new doubts and suggestions arise, we must perish. This is that veracity of the soul which can alone protect us, and make life continuous. But what I do maintain is, that no analysis whatever,—no, not if the power of the microscope were, as it will be, multiplied a million times,—can get any farther than that ultimate fact of the “mystery” which makes *necessary truths* possible. Let me try and make my meaning clear.

Here is “experience.” The two factors are the Subject and the Object—the living thing, and the fact

* See, for a striking passage from *In Memoriam*, the Appendix.

that impresses it. Psychology, analysing the processes which go on in the mind of the living thing, finds two—Deduction and Induction. Now the first postulates of Deduction are (the facts which are called) Necessary Truths. The first postulates of Induction are sensible facts *not* necessary.

You perceive that your correspondent sides with Dr Whewell and others upon this question. I find much to criticise in the Moral System of that most accomplished gentleman, but maintain the distinction between *necessary* and *contingent* truth. You have not in the least shaken my opinion upon that little matter, nor has Mr Mill, though his attack upon this fortress of philosophy, and, as I contend, fortress of faith also, is formidable enough.

To begin with, it does not appear to me, though it does to you, that when Dr Whewell admits that people may have to grow into the perception of necessary truths he abandons his case. Of course they may. The just conclusion from a sound deduction is a necessary truth, (which may also be a fact capable, under certain conditions, of being reached inductively,) but it may take a long process to get at it—and the process is, if you like, “experience.” A process of thought in a living being may no doubt be called “experience.”

It is “experience” because it is life. It is not a *necessary* truth that one and one are two—that is mere nomenclature, the naming of a fact, (a point which Mr Mill has very ingeniously laboured, but which is entirely obvious.) Having begun your nomenclature, you may go on to three, four, five, whatever you please. Only, having completed your vocabulary, and got your facts to deal with, the inference that twice 2240 is 4480 brings out a new element—it is a necessary conclusion, and the necessariness is indicated by the use of the word *because*, the sign of deduction. You surely do not mean to insist that because a Samoiede who can only count his toes would have to be educated up to the capacity to do that sum, therefore the *truth* of the conclusion depends upon experience? If so, twice 2240 apples might be one thing, and twice 2240 nuts another.

That fire burns is, you say, as necessary a truth as that two straight lines cannot enclose a space. I cannot see with you. Of course if the thing *called* fire happens not to *be* fire, that thing will not burn—so that it is no doubt safe to say,—fire burns, if fire be fire; and the parallel proposition would be, two straight lines, if straight, go straightly. But you need not think of two straight lines in connexion with their

capacity or non-capacity of enclosing on all sides. You may think of them apart, or anyhow. The proposition, however, contemplates them in a particular relation, and says, not that they *do* not, but that they *cannot* enclose a space.

When you say fire burns, you mean it burns *something*, if "something" be brought sufficiently near to it. There is nothing in the fire,—we are told,*—analogous to the sensation we experience. So we must have something burnable supposed to exist in proximity to the fire. If the something be *not* burnable, then the fire does not burn. Now, let us try and shape the other proposition after the same model. Two straight lines cannot enclose a space,—so long as space and straightness remain the same, shall we say, or how? The truth is, we cannot make the two propositions parallel, twist language as we may: and the fact that we cannot is the disproof of the identity of character.

I adhere, then, strenuously to the old distinction between necessary and contingent truth. A necessary truth is, in my mind, a truth which is connected with some previous truth (rightly inferred or axiomatic) by the link expressed in the word *because*, or the word

* This seems to me unmeaning. What is the force of the "analogous" here?

therefore. Or, it is an axiom or first postulate implied in all reasoning,—something that cannot be eliminated from human consciousness. For example, the idea that the universe is moral ; that there is, of a truth, an $\eta\theta\eta$ in things which is for ever and for an insoluble residuum at the bottom of the crucible of analysis. Insoluble, I say, for all that the keenest scrutiny can effect is to return the problem back upon the mind wrapped up inextricably in that very phraseology of “natural history” which, in denying, postulates the thing denied.

I read Hume when very young, and thought then, as I think now, that his essay on the Idea of Cause or Power was idle. I say nothing here of what I did not then perceive as clearly as I do now, namely, that it *must* be impossible to determine the genesis of any idea, so long as the mystery of life is the mystery of life—the very utmost possible to psychology, whether with a physiological or other basis, being to find a formula which will *correspond* with the apparent growth, just as gravitation does with the movements of the planets. Of that I do not now speak. But what startled me, as it still startles me, was that any human being should think anything is gained or lost by saying we know only sequences. Why is the idea of sequence,

or mere succession of phenomena, to be a fact, and our idea of *consequence*, or necessary result, to be no fact at all? A boy shoots a marble forth with a fillip of the finger: that marble moves another marble, which falls into a hole. Up comes my sceptical philosopher, and says, "You only observe a sequence of phenomena—that is what your notion of causation amounts to." But I try in vain to accept the criticism. I have a distinct idea of cause, and have as much right to start with it, as to end with it and to say it is nothing. I cannot analyse it,—then it is an ultimate fact, and ten thousand million Humes cannot alter it. Whether or not I obtained my first idea of causative force from some exercise of my own will, I don't know—nor does he. Probably it was *evolved* in some such exercise, and that is all we can say. To say more, is to pretend to square the circle. Somehow, I *infer* things: have got the ideas of *must* and *cannot*. Among things visible and tangible I say, for example, "The conditions being similar, marble will always move marble." But I make no such proviso when I say, "Two straight lines cannot enclose a space," or when I say, "Truthfulness *must* be for my good," or when I affirm anything whatever which I believe to be absolutely proved.

I cannot, for the life of me, understand how the

existence of absolute or necessary ideas can be denied by any one who sits down to reason at all. For reasoning implies necessity. You cannot use the word *because* or *therefore*, without the implication. A chain of reasoning may have, say, a thousand links. The thousandth, if the argument be just, is inevitably derived from the first—it is a *necessary truth*. And, again, going back, the first link is inevitably to be inferred from the last. That, also, is a necessary truth, and *may* be an axiom or first postulate.

I have not, of course, any instance of the *dictum de omni et nullo* in my mind—

All men are mortal,
The Duke of Wellington is a man :
Therefore the Duke of Wellington is mortal.

Obviously, as Mr Mill has abundantly, I was going to say superfluously shown,* this syllogism is nothing but a mere formal instrument,—presents no development of truth. But it is a different case, if we say, for example, A man is entitled to be free in such and such

* By the by, do not you think Mr Mill hastened the death of the Duke ? He must have been painfully impressed by seeing it stated (in Mr Mill's "Logic") about a hundred thousand times, that he was mortal. One feels sure it must have preyed upon his mind, hero of a hundred fights though he was.

things, and trace that back to the truth that every man is free (so far as external force is concerned) to do all he pleases so long as he makes no other man less free, and that again, back to the principle of truthfulness,* which necessitates liberty as a condition. The principle of Truthfulness, or Adjustment, is bound up in our old friend the mystery of life, and no man can show that the affirmation of that principle is a *dictum de omni et nullo*. You cannot prove it by induction of instances :—

Whatever gains nothing desirable is wrong :
Untruthfulness is something which never gained
anything desirable,
Therefore Untruthfulness is wrong.

But no human ingenuity can ever prove that Minor by induction. Large masses of the human race act as if they disbelieved it; perhaps they do. But no human ingenuity, again, can ever make me disbelieve it. It *must* be true, or nothing is true,—and that is what I mean by a necessary truth.

Let it not be said that any such so-called necessary truth is an empirical generalisation which has forgotten its own origin. Once more, and once more, and for

* It need scarcely be explained that what is here meant is not that mere verbal truthfulness which is a mere symbol, and may in states of war cease to be any duty at all.

ever, I come back with the question, *What was the origin of the origin?* Whatever is here now must have been potentially here always. I fearlessly look the *ameba* in the face,—or the stomach! I fearlessly echo the cry of *vive le monad!* And what then?

Let me return, for a moment,—not out of place,—to your teaching, that in order to *know* more we must *be* more. It appears to me to amount, here, to nothing. We never can be more in such a sense as not to be bounded by our experience. Every conceivable intelligence is so bounded, and must be so bounded. We can only know, as other beings can only know, the facts which come within our orbit. Raise us as high as you please,—sink us as low as you please,—it still comes to that. The only question is, What do we know? What *is* the limit of our experience? For to no mind, greater or less, can there be any knowledge in the sense of knowledge not given in the total of its life; which is another way of naming experience.

It only remains to look at the word “experience” in the lowest sense in which it can be used. And hardly “remains;” for, change the pieces about as we will, the game is still the same. If any one asserts candidly that we know nothing but that of which “our senses” (whatever that phrase may mean) inform us,

we can not only retort upon him with an assertion as dogmatic as his own,—and of the two the less unprovable,—that our only certainty is in the consciousness of our own existence ; we can add this,—the distinction between *ourselves* and *our senses* means something, or means nothing. If it means anything, we know ourselves as distinguished from our senses, and therefore we do know something else ; and that something most vital for our purpose. But if, on the contrary, the distinction is a merely verbal one, then the question is,—without divaricating *means* of knowledge at all,—What do *we* know,—we, as we are,—spirit *or* body,—spirit *and* body,—mere matter,—any *X* you prefer,—what do *we* know? And, in that case, I fall back upon what goes before as to the argument from experience. Briefly recapitulated, that would stand thus :—It is impossible to show that our knowledge is limited by our experience in any sense peculiar to us. All knowledge must be so limited. However great the Intelligence, its experience, considered as its total life, must contain all knowledge possible to it. Again ; it is impossible to show that, antecedently to experience, one thing is as probable as another ; because to all experience, trace it down to as low a point as you please, there go two factors, subject and object, and the shares

contributed respectively by the two factors cannot be determined. Again ; it is impossible to get rid of the existence of necessary ideas, for all processes in which occur the words *because* and *therefore* presuppose them. Again ; every argument which can be urged against the possibility of complete knowledge of “ *noumena* ” may be equally urged against complete knowledge of “ *phenomena*. ”

I suppose it will have already appeared in these sentences that I do not think any of the old problems are affected by the development hypothesis. To those problems the idea of *law* makes no difference ; neither does the idea of *growth*. I am certain that there never was a time in my life when I should have disputed the facts of the “ development school ; ” and never a time when they would have appeared to me to threaten any faith that I held dear. First of all, it is as certain as arithmetic that the scientific treatment of the great problem must encounter precisely the same difficulties as the metaphysical treatment of it ; in other words, must *become* a metaphysic the moment it faces them. Secondly, if science professes to ignore them, they may be forced upon it ; and if science attempts to regulate life, they are forced upon it. By keeping my mind fixed

upon analytic processes, I may forget this, may even lose all power of vividly appreciating it ; but that is an injury to myself and the truth. When once I am roused from my scientific trance, I cannot fail to see that not one fact of my consciousness is altered by any theory of "development" whatever, or by any *possible* attainment of scientific scrutiny. Still, and for ever, I am confronted by the same solemn forms. I have only discovered more or less of the formula by which the Infinite Force acts. Another turn of the wheel may startle me with a disclosure which shall make me *feel* with overwhelming awe, as I now *see* with overwhelming clearness, that the crudest fetishism of faith, if morally pure, is just infinitely nearer to the Truth than any scheme which waves aside those importunate angels of thought and emotion which you, indeed, do *not* wave aside, but which "scientific" men of another mould treat with scorn.

Taking up the development idea, and tracing things backward indefinitely, we are confronted, in another shape, with the difficulty which is represented in the "infinite divisibility of matter," as it is called. Go back as far as we please, we can never come to zero. This is quite as difficult a conception in itself as that of an Infinite Will. What is more, I can never be sure, at

any particular landing-place, on my way *down* the stairs, that it may not be a re-beginning, and that the next discovery may not be that of a higher “development” terminating a previous cycle. Development in cycles! A boundless cataclysmic history! Why, when I think of that abyss of space in which I live, and the whirl of worlds going on around me, and reflect that any moment of time—the very next to this in which I write—may sweep this humming little ball of a planet into silence,—when these things come to me, as they sometimes do to almost every child of man, I am tempted to say that the only certain things are the things which scientific certainty ignores. Development? Yes; of course we can add a column of figures downwards as well as upwards; and what then? The sum is infinite,* and the problem is the same, plant my thought at which particular unit I may. My friend here exclaims, “All mysteries fall to pieces before the man who simply says, I do not know.” I try to repeat after him, “I do not know,” and to occupy myself with pure science. But suddenly an awful sha-

* What is meant by the gradual conquest of Nature? Nature is infinite. When this planet is full, what then? Though I could pass from this planet to another, what then? There *must* come a time when civilisation and science will not help—unless we can “civilise” space, with all the terrors of the unknown.

dow falls upon my soul, and I find myself kneeling to the God of my catechism.

Mr Herbert Spencer—of whose greatness as a thinker no word need be said by me—suggests that the Principle of Divinity may be as much superior to mere personality as personality is superior to mechanism. But, again, nothing can be extracted from this which will vary the problem. A person is the highest thing I know. If I am ever able to conceive anything higher, it will be because I shall have become higher. But, in that case, the Highest will stand related to my higher just as my present conception of a Divine personality stands related to my own conscious personality. If I ever lose consciousness of my own identity and free will I shall cease to be a person; in other words, I shall be another being, and not the same being. So long as I remain a person, *i.e.*, a conscious intelligence, so long I can conceive nothing higher than a person. And if I ever cease to be a conscious intelligence, I shall be, *quoad* myself, non-existent.

The Life-Force which has originated me and all things, (and which, in truth, whoever talks about “pantheism,” must include all things,) cannot be less than I am. It must be a moral force, for I am moral—a force which demands perfection in me, for it is

Duty that I should do the *whole* of what is right. In different moods of the same mind, and in minds of different orders, this Force will be differently conceived. It would be impossible to conciliate Shelley and Whately in their habit of mind with respect to the ultimate truth. One of them (*called* an atheist) raved all his life long about a Spirit of the Universe ; the other had an idea of God which was, perhaps, not so very unlike that of an ancient Hebrew. But, granting whatever may be granted to fluctuating moods and different casts of character, what is gained by calling the Life of all life a Principle, or a Law, instead of a Person ? Talk as long as I may, I can never get beyond this :—That which originates personality must include all that personality is. I find an $\eta\theta\eta$ existing in things as they are. I am moral, and there is an end. It is useless to attempt to analyse that fact,—any question possible to be put does presuppose, and does posit, in terms, something presumed to be past analysis. Reduce it, if you please, to a preference of pleasure to pain—still, you have the fact of the preference ; and the insoluble $\eta\theta\eta$ in the fact that I prefer it for others as well as myself, for others at my own cost. The Force which originated things must have included this element, or the element could not be

here. And when I have gained the idea of a Moral Order in the universe, in vain does the scientific or generalising mind invite me to *stop* at the word "law." It is only in reflection,—in "reflex action,"—in criticism, that I can be so arrested. In life, in action, in positive, direct existence, the synthesis of Law is Will; and the generalisation, or formula, which you say I must obey at my peril, turns itself into a person the moment my attitude changes. The idea of Law is as anthropomorphic as that of a Person. What idea can I have that is not anthropomorphic? Clearly none. But if that is fatal to me, it is equally fatal to others. In fact, however, it is fatal to neither of us; and the fancy that it was so, is only standing on one's own head and saying] the world is upside-down. A life which, by its urgent needs or its hastening activities, left less time for scientific analysis would make all this standing on the head of ours next to impossible. It is perfectly easy, by adhering to the scientific attitude, to the exclusion of every other, to get to see nothing but "law;" but, I repeat, it is always possible, both in logic, and in living fact, to compel another attitude, in which the choice shall be between superstition and religion. Science may be the arbiter of that choice; but she can be driven to an

alternative. The conception of uniformity of law may knock a mob of gods from off their pedestals ; but, when it has done that good work, science must come and kneel to the Infinite ONE.

* I contend that Theism and the Moral Sentiment are correlatives. I say to the Enemy, “ You must take away my will,—which is moral,—which is the essence of my personality,—before you can hide from me the face of a personal God.” This conclusion I owe to no teacher under heaven. It came to me, it stays by me, as with others, in hours of unassisted struggling with the mystery of things. In that I can rest, when doubt has done its worst. All that is necessary for “ life and godliness ” may be inferred from that one point, by evidence more or less clear. Everything good is possible, when, passing from “ analysis,” and criticism of life, I turn, living, to the Life itself, and instead of saying, Universal Law must be obeyed, but nobody can tell how it began or how it ended, I kneel and say, “ Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God All-Mighty, which wast, and art, and art to come, just and true are thy ways, O thou King of Saints !”

And, once again, I find I *must* say that. It comes to me, whether I seek it or not. Feuerbach does not in the least help me. He does not shift the ground one

inch. To tell me that I must look before and behind, and find my religion in Humanity, is only re-stating Pantheism ; which oscillates with Theism moment by moment in the very mind that embraces it. To tell me that what Humanity worships is its own projected image is, of all idle things, the most idle. Once more, it is just adding up the sum from the other end, and fancying we have altered the total. Not a fact is changed ; not a fact accounted for. And the next time, in some great moral crisis, I cry mightily to Infinite Truth and Goodness to be near me, and guide me, and uphold me,—I shall not be made to leave off, by being told that I am only praying to myself—projected.

About *accounting* for things, one little word. It is not true,—I would venture to say to a sceptic,—that, in that respect Theism and Non-theism* are in the same position. Theism alone takes up, includes, absorbs, employs, the fact that the universe is *moral* —the Non-Theist, declaring that Science discloses nothing to him but *law*, may indeed talk about the Moral Order of the Universe, and say there is no other God—the Theist answers, No other God is

* By Non-theist, is, of course, meant the man, whoever he may be, that says, “ I do not know.” The Atheist *denies*.

wanted, for you cannot *act*, you cannot *live* without conceiving this Moral Order as a Personal Will. You do, in fact, so conceive it, whatever you may fancy, and by whatever tricks of phrase you may seek to resolve the insoluble. But, (the Theist continues,) my thought deliberately and consciously absorbs all the facts I see—it is, indeed, forced upon me by a fact which inexorably demands to be absorbed; and so, my thought consciously *contains* the whole. But yours does not. It leaves out the *X*, the quantity which accounts for all the rest, (so far as anything can be accounted for, *i.e.*, down as low, or up as high, as the ultimate facts,) because it shuns to infer the objective counterpart which is the necessary logic of that *X*, because in IT is the identification of Subject and Object. This is a pure loss to the sceptic. For his “development,” if it leads any whither, must lead him down to an impossible objective *zero*, which presents the same difficulties with respect to the origin of things, and does *not* absorb the previous difficulty of the *X*. Manifestly, we cannot get beyond the ultimate facts,—whatever is *is*, and there is our terminus; but the non-theist refuses to go as far as he can go,—refuses to go as far as he may be driven to go.

As to the beginning of Being, I do not know what

it means. Whatever does now exist must have existed potentially, from all eternity. But to say that things were made out of nothing may be as intelligible as any statement of the subject can be made to an uncultivated mind.

The question of “origin” does, in stern truth, occur in the same inexorable shape as at the First Beginning,—in every possible beginning. This would, perhaps, be new to a good many people, but it is very plain. I am quite sure that if I had been asked, when a Puritan boy, about “Development,” or the “Origin of Species,” I should have said, speaking quite *à priori*, “I do not doubt it: we are glad to see your induction, and to honour your great gifts and ingenious industry; but we could have guessed it all, without a hint from science.”

Only, what then? Have the goodness to define *species* in such terms that the precise moment of interchange of “type” shall be seized, and every condition scientifically covered? Why, of course, you can’t do it. It is the old story of the penknife. First you break the blade, and get a new one; then the handle, and get a new one. Only here you have got super-added the difficulty of incommensurable oscillation. In other words, you are again confronted by the

mystery of life, and can just as well *conceive* the origin of a species, as the origin of that universe, which includes all species whatever. You, sir, would agree with me that it is vain to trace me back to an anthropoid ape, and fancy *that* has made my altar-stone ridiculous, or gained a final advantage over me. No, I say; you have made out a *formula* which represents, or enables you to tabulate certain visible relations between certain visible things. But the very problem you pretend to ignore meets you at every point of the path by which you seek to escape it, and the old theory of "special creations" may just as well be true, as not. On *any* hypothesis, the facts might be the same. If a personal power creates, moment by moment, every grain of dust on the wing of a candle-moth, the formula is the same. This inscrutable power, call it what you will, cannot take any form but that of consecutive activity, and co-ordinated law. Find the origin of species? Find the beginning of a circle? When you can, you will be able to square it. But I am satisfied that the serpent will never let go its own tail.

Surrounded by the circle we live. Higher and higher it rises towards heaven—wider and wider it spreads upon the earth. That we adjust ourselves to

its movements is the condition of life: nay, it *is* life. In so doing, our safety lies. Neglecting that, we perish, or decay, as the neglect is less or more. But I hold it utterly vain to think that science is one whit more certain or more progressive than the philosophy of "absolute" truth. In one sense, the movement of religious thought must be circular, for its object is an object of worship; its very essence is continual detention round the infinite ideas. But, from age to age, every problem of human knowledge requires re-statement, and that re-statement it receives. It is yet to be seen whether, in a later day, some positivist may not arise upon the other side, and leaning on the breast of the elder sister, Philosophy, be able to say to acquiescent Science,—"The first shall be last, and the last first, in alternate ministration; 'the wheel has come full-circle,' and it is now my turn. If your 'linear progress' should be in perpetually returning zigzag, how do you triumph over the 'circular movement' which you once assigned to me?"

I repeat that I do not know, or seek to know, how much of what I have here written may be without direct application to any position *you* would choose to assume. It is a wonderful world, and wonder-

fully alike are we all, in spite of our mutual misunderstandings. When people's phraseology has been well criticised, it is astonishing how small the sphere of difference turns out to be. All men, whatever their positive faiths, and whatever their religious creeds, feel "the burden and mystery of life;" other things supposed equal, the finer the intelligence and the moral nature of the individual, the more heavily the burden weighs. Some minds have always a tinge of sadness, over which a criticising humour plays like lightning over summer clouds. Some men grasp the darkness and misery of existence at a stroke, thrust it aside, and under some plea, whether of policy and *savoir-vivre*, or of positive faith, call it a mystery,—and there an end; a free, unimpeded path being left right ahead for the march of thought and deed thenceforward. Others find this impossible. The "burden and mystery of life" is to them wide, immeasurable, omnipresent, not to be treated by any *coup-de-main* of the intellect. It is a spectre at the side of bed and board, never wholly laid; it is a flavour in the daily cup; a painful murmur mingled in every sound that rises to the ear,—something diffused, like an odour or the echo of a bell, by no means to be disposed of by giving it a name, and saying, "Lie there, for a Mystery, as you are, and

trouble me no more!" Those, for whom the great riddle exists thus, are called *Sceptics*. But, oh, what is a sceptic? Was Little-Faith, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," a sceptic, or was he not? Was Silas Marner, who could not, as William Dane did, arrive at "assurance of salvation," a sceptic?* What is the difference, in GOD's eye, between the man who gathers up all the misery and wrong into a lump and calls it Sin-and-Hell, and the man who cannot, for intellectual reasons, do anything of the kind, but finds Evil to be a diffusive presence? I do not know. But nothing will persuade me that God is absent where there is sincere life. And nothing will ever make me love the people who scratch and fight over a truth till there is nothing left of it that is worth retaining. I think of the greedy, cruel harlot before King Solomon, and while an idea is being dismembered to compromise the question of whose it is, I am ready to exclaim, "Give *her* the living child, but in no wise slay it!"

H. H.

* When I was in Marner's case, though much younger than he, a kind friend lent me "A Learned and Choyce Treatise of Assurance, by Nathaniel Culverwell," hoping it would relieve my doubts. I did not dare to tell any human being the effect it really *did* have upon my mind,—namely, to raise a new and worse doubt—What is the final *differentia* of acceptable faith?

TO

ALEXANDER BAIN, Esq., A.M.,

ETC. ETC.

WHEN I read, years ago, with greedy interest, and in the course of a few hours, (in spite of the size of the book,) your great work on "The Emotions and the Will," I said to myself, "Here, at last, is a writer with whose moral criticism I shall never have to disagree." But when I turned, later on, to your book on "The Study of Character," with its criticisms on Phrenology, I found that my first conclusion had been too quickly formed. And yet so very large is the proportion of what you say in which I entirely coincide, that I cannot rid myself of the notion that differences would vanish upon close discussion. I cannot hope to make the discussion so close upon this occasion as even to justify—to any critic of my words less generous than you will be—my opening it at all. And yet I will venture to ask you to permit me—writing from memory, and without having either of your works before me,—

to see if I cannot suggest to you grounds for a reconsideration of some of the psychological criticism contained in the book last mentioned. One thing I feel nearly certain of; that my recollections will never misrepresent you ; that this little discussion will do you no injustice in any single point of the whole argument.

First, you will, perhaps, bear with a few paragraphs about phrenology, and then with a comment upon a striking passage in your work on "The Emotions and the Will," of which the *indications* appear to me deserving of special notice.

As the *history* of what I now think, and what I have formerly thought, of phrenology, may very properly be considered part of the argument, it may be given briefly, to begin with.

1. I do not consider, never did consider, the psychology complete, though it seems to me to cover more of the facts demanding to be covered than any other.

2. I quite recognise the difficulties, founded on the study of the brain, which exist in the "organology"—if that barbarous compound may be allowed to pass.

3. For all that, I adhere, and resolutely adhere, to the

cranioscopy. I have often suffered in life by neglecting its intimations ; never by heeding them.

4. I nevertheless agree that the cranioscopy is defective, because no sufficient index of power is yet furnished. What you have said of general retentiveness powerfully struck me, when, as a lad, I first had my head manipulated. I felt that I had a "general retentiveness," which was not accounted for by "temperament;" and similar things were obvious to me in other people's cases. This difficulty, however, has never much troubled me in the application of the cranioscopy, because general quickness to observe and combine goes a long way in putting one upon the right track.

I must, indeed, say, that it is difficult for me to understand how any observant person, who will be patient and take trouble, can help believing in the mere cranioscopy, taken empirically, unless he be deficient in the power of appreciating form. It seems to me almost impossible that an attentive and ingenuous looker-on can study heads in groups without arriving at something very like conviction. Bring six good actors, six good engineers, six good poets (!), six good musicians, six travellers, six women, six children together, and their heads shall all raise strong presumptions in

favour of the phrenological cranioscopy. For my part, I have been more or less a "cranioscopist" since the age of thirteen. I can and do remember heads, as well as faces, for any number of years you like, so as to be able to compare one seen twenty years ago with one that may be now under my eye. Let it be admitted that, when you come to the "organs" supposed to lie behind the frontal sinus, you are often likely to err. Use all such words as "organs" and "faculties" provisionally—all *that* is understood. And it yet remains true, in my opinion, that the cranioscopy is, in the main, accurate, and the psychology too, however crude and loose may be the terminology.

It strikes me as being a little unfortunate that you should have selected the work of the late Mr George Combe as your text-book. True, you could hardly do otherwise than deal with the accredited teacher of the school; but when, fifteen years ago, I read that gentleman's "Constitution of Man in Relation to External Nature," I thought it a book that meant nothing, the book of a very respectable plodder. No phrenological writer ever pleased me so much as Sir George MacKenzie, I *think*; but there are nearly those years since I

read a phrenological book of any kind. In the *Phrenological Journal* I remember, as ingenious writers, Mr Luke Burke and Mr Robert Cox. No doubt there were other able men, whose names I forget; but the majority of the speculations in that Journal struck me as being rather silly. If it appears arrogant that I should have formed any opinion of the kind when so young, it may be some excuse that there was not a question in metaphysics with which I had not then tried a fall; and that, before I was out of jackets, I could repeat by rote the sixth chapter of Butler's *Analogy*, "On the Opinion of Necessity as Influencing Practice," and the whole of the correspondence between Butler and Clarke upon the question, Whether what is necessary must be necessary or not in all times and places. I fear I could not now perform either of those little *tours de force*! In those days I used to fancy that my appointed work was to set right the psychology of the phrenologist; but, alas for the vanity of human intent, a stronger tendency drew me upon quite other lines of activity, and, if it had not been for your book, I dare say I should never have written about phrenology even the few paragraphs which follow.

It is part of the history that I should mention how I first became acquainted with phrenology. It

was quite casually, from a card manual, which I saw in a shop window. (I could make a drawing of the window even now !) Instantly the whole scheme flashed through my mind ; and instantly I saw, with a sense of triumph, the more obvious blunders of my manual. For example, the distinction between perceptive faculties, sentiments, and propensities, I at once rejected with contempt. As I walked along, I framed for myself this formula : “*Every* faculty must have a perception, an emotion, and an impulse to act.” There could be no distinction in these respects, if the idea of “faculties” was to be retained at all. Each must have its own proper *differentia*—its *X*, which it perceived, felt about, and had a “propensity” for. And it did not occur to me that it would be worth while to write this criticism to anybody, (as I was advised to do,) because it would be of no use to try and explain anything so obvious to any one who was so stupid as to miss seeing it for himself.

But there was another criticism which I made, there and then, in the street. You remark, in your book, that phrenologists are impatient of any talk of “association of ideas.” I do not know—not having read them sufficiently to say. But it is very probable; because they seemed to me to have failed to discern that a

great many of their “organs” must conspire to produce any particular action of the mind. Let us take No. I., the “organ” of attraction between men and women. This must have its own precise *differentia* of perception and emotion, (I said to myself,) but its action must be simultaneous with that of other “organs”—Form, Colour, Adhesiveness. And so in other cases. In other words, though “association of ideas” may not be held to originate anything,—which is what I take the phrenologist to mean,—yet associated action of different faculties *must* be supposed. For this there appeared to me to be no provision in the psychology.

But nothing struck me with more force than the helplessness of the cranioscopist of quite ordinary resources, in presence of the question of *power*. Mr Lewes has stated this difficulty with great force and clearness. All that one reads about “temperament,” though it is very good in itself, is but a drop in the ocean compared with the problem to be solved. Mr Luke Burke, I remember, wrote some very keen things upon the subject of temperament. What is now present to my mind is his assertion of a student-temperament and a secretive-temperament; and all he said carried with it my assent.

A very great difficulty in the psychology arose in my mind before an hour was over, from the place occupied in the map by the organ of "Concentrateness." Clearly it had no business among what my manual called the "Animal propensities;" and even when I had rejected as absurd the divarication of the manual, and insisted upon the co-ordination of all the "organs," it was difficult to find a last analysis, a final statement of the function of this particular "organ," which should give it a right to its place just above Philoprogenitiveness and under Self-Esteem.

But, for all that, there was not, and there is not a single "organ" of which I am, in the mere empirical cranioscopy, so sure as this of Concentrateness. There is nothing in which I find people more sharply discriminated than in the tendency to fix the attention and dwell on things, *apart from their likes and dislikes*; and I always feel perfect confidence in predicting from the largeness or smallness of the organ. It did not help me when it appeared that the organ was said to be double, the lower portion taking the name of Inhabitiveness. A friend said the function was the mere tendency to continue; but what could my best ingenuity make of an organ of continuance? Here, then, was my first glimpse of the great crudeness with which

the ordinary metaphysics of the phrenologists represented function. And yet, to this hour, I undertake to tell, beforehand, without looking at a person's head, whether "Concentrateness" be large or small,—if I am only permitted to listen to his talk, or to read his book. I know very well how it acts, and very well how the external sign shows itself, and can, and constantly do predict, with entire accuracy, from one to the other, either way.

Of simplicity of function, however, I find from your book different people may take very different views. You appear to think No. 1 a good organ for experiment, on the ground of the simplicity of the alleged function, but you doubt the organ. On the other hand, I have no more doubt of the organ than I have that I now hold a pen, and I have no practical difficulty whatever in predicting, either *from* or *to* it; but I entirely disagree with you about the "simplicity." Not only is there the enormous difference which we know to exist between the Teutonic and the Oriental mind in this matter; not only the enormous difference between a Shelley and a Byron, or between both and a Southey, but there are still more *arresting* facts known to the statists of crime; and open, I think, to most of us. I confess the final *differentia* of the instinct strikes me

as being, not a simple or uniform, but an exceedingly complicated and varying matter.

On the other hand, I do not feel the difficulty which you feel about here and there another “organ.” That of Adhesiveness, for example, is to me no stumbling-block whatever. Surely a faculty of attachment, a social impulse, pure and simple, is intelligible enough? Do you remember the description given by George Eliot of the *human* glance of Savonarola? That glance is the index of a large “organ” of Adhesiveness—of human sympathy, pure and simple. It has nothing to do with intelligence, or with sex. It was wanting in De Quincey; it was patent in Father Matthew. It was large in Southey; it was deficient in Byron. It was large in Charles James Fox. Him you class, I remember, as a man of the Emotive temperament; but we should differ a little in the use of words here. Emotive is a large adjective. I should call Shelley emotive; Fox I should call pre-eminently sociable,—a man of society. But there is no reason whatever why such a man should, in other respects, answer to your description of the emotive temperament. Fox happened to do so; Savonarola did not. As to this “organ,” again, I am quite sure about it, and can with perfect accuracy predict either from or

to it. The female head is broadly distinguished from the male head in the region where the phrenologists place the organ. In the male head, and indeed in the female, it is very commonly found in conjunction with a large Combativeness: and in the head of the good soldier, it is almost always strikingly developed. The difference between human beings in this respect —that of the instinct of humanity, call it,—is so very striking, that whatever may be its last analysis, I hardly understand your difficulties.

Again, I am quite certain about No. 3, in spite of your doubts about the definition of the function of this organ of Philoprogenitiveness. Surely a strong guiding presumption may be gathered by any one who will notice male and female heads in succession. In my own mother, the “organ” was so strongly marked as to make the arrangement of her hair a task of some difficulty. It is strongly marked in my own head, (for a man,) and the peculiarity is continued in a boy of mine. The phrenologists are careless, no doubt, in admitting “tenderness to the aged,” as part of the function of this “organ,” defined as it now is; but it may be a useful guide in forwarding the analysis of the function from the starting-point empirically gained.

Your difficulties about the alleged organ of Size, in connexion with Form, I do not understand. It is true, I cannot *picture* a "form" without making it of some given "size;" but, for all that, size and form are *different* conceptions. Extension may be conceived as boundless. Form, occur how it may, must limit it. However, unless my memory misleads me, the psychology of this organ of "size" is *admittedly* tentative. The cranioscopy, too, is doubtful. Surely it is marked with a ? in the busts? At all events, it is small in my own head, while my judgment of size is very accurate.

To the perception of "Weight," or momentum, you do not, I think, object to have an "organ" assigned. Whether you do or not, there is nothing about which I am clearer than that the brains of great engineers invariably show the "organ" large, as marked in its place by the phrenologist.

The same remark applies to the "organ" of Constructiveness; which, as I remember, you challenge—only it applies with still greater strength. Let the difficulty of defining the precise function, in scientific language, be what it may, I would stake my most important earthly interests upon the fact that the most sceptical observer could not resist the empirical pre-

sumption afforded by the heads of engineers and reclaimists, as compared with the heads of those who are unhandy in applying force to specific ends. Place the administration of a railway before me, and I shall have no more difficulty in picking out the engineer than I should have in telling a poet, if I saw him.

Did you ever, by the by, study the head of Blondin, the rope-dancer, in connexion with the organs of Weight and Constructiveness? Judging from the photographs, I should say that, with a little more intellect, the man might have made a good engineer. And—*apropos* of Concentrativeness—I undertake to say—without having seen the back of his head, and judging merely from the look-out of the face—that the organ would be marked large by any practical phrenologist in the world. I would rest the whole question on the fact that the head of Blondin is as peculiar in the region of Concentrativeness as in that of Weight—and there, the heaviness of the brow is so extreme as to give the character to the face.

One of the “organs” that you express strong doubts about is that of “Secretiveness.” Let me stand excused in your eyes for saying that it is with extreme surprise that I find you have not recognised in human

being a weighty difference, in this regard, quite *sui generis*, and obviously connate. There may be many reasons for concealment, and many degrees and kinds of it, but an *instinct* of secrecy is, to my mind, one of the most patent of psychological facts. Everybody, I think you say in your book, learns the necessity and propriety of concealment under certain conditions; painful experience forces the lesson upon him. But, indeed, everybody doesn't learn anything of the kind,—while others never need to learn it: they bring their own safeguard into the world with them in a connate tendency to reticence, as motiveless in itself as a magpie's secret, but constituting, in alliance with other faculties, a powerful instrument of self-defence. These good people never wear their hearts upon their sleeves, come what may; never wholly unbosom. On the other hand, all the painful experience in the world does not suffice to teach an effective reserve to those who are poorly endowed in that region of the brain, which lies beneath the spot on the bust marked (I think) No. 7 by the phrenologists. In my own head the organ is deficient, and my tendency to self-disclosure far beyond the bounds of necessity or safety, is, and always has been, a perpetual trouble to me. Concealment, or suppression, for a felt reason—secrecy of the *ex post*

facto kind—I am equal to. But, as the majority of my fellow-creatures practise, without effort and without motive, a far more effectual reserve, I find I generally come off second-best in any encounter,—unless I expend a very disproportionate amount of energy in the fight. At an age when most young men have learnt all the practical wisdom they need, I was quite capable of telling a man to his face that I did not like him, or asking him how much he had a year. I have, in my time, actually committed both those enormities; besides always committing the error of too much self-disclosure, so as to get all the discredit of egotism from people who are, what I am not, really and by instinct proud and self-preferring. I can lay my hand upon others who have the same unhappy peculiarity; and the best advice I can give them is,—Steer clear of the secretive people; for, however good they may be, their habit of mind keeps up, in their behalf, a reserve of power which you can never have, but which the course of events will generally turn against you. It is not easy, I suppose, (since you do not see it at once,) to explain how a large organ of secretiveness operates. But it is one great source of what is called practical tact, and those who are without it are extremely apt to get themselves into hobbles in which they have to bear

a great deal more blame than belongs to them. It may seem an absurd thing to write, but yet it is perfectly true, that the best instances of the organ which I have seen have been among Roman Catholic priests and High Church people. So keen is my feeling upon this subject, that I can never pass a Romanist priest in the street without a feeling of repulsion, such as I experience in looking at a snake. He is pretty certain, too, I observe, to be of the secretive *temperament*. “The secretive temperament!” you exclaim; “what on earth is that?” Sir, with your leave, there is a certain ingrained depth of complexion, not easy to describe, which I have from time immemorial noticed to belong to stealthy men. Surely I remember a paper by Mr Luke Burke, in the *Phrenological Journal*, in which he successfully maintained the superiority of the dark races over the fair in their power of self-repression? One more attempt I will make to convey my meaning, when I speak of a connate tendency to conceal. A cruel man, without that tendency, would be likely to slay his enemy out of hand. A cruel man, *with* it, would be likely to torture him. With such painful certainty do I, in my own mind, individualise the thing I mean, that I cannot even write thus briefly of it without horror. As

for the “organ” itself, it is very easy to observe, and I would recommend anybody who is anxious to test cranioscopy in that direction to begin his experiments by observing Roman Catholic priests, and bureaucrats.

Here, again, I waive the psychology, but I do most strenuously insist on the empirically registered facts, and am sure that if I could carry a doubter through the streets with me for a few months, I could educate him into certainty. What surprises me in your case is, that you do not recognise, in your studies of character, this specific tendency to concealment, reserve, or the holding of one’s self in the leash ; a thing quite *sui generis*, and entirely distinct from cautiousness, or the prudence of reflection. To me the sun in the sky is not plainer.

Among other “organs” upon which you come down with powerful criticism is that of Ideality. Here, you say, “the clear eye of Mr Samuel Bailey has caught” the phrenologists “tripping.” I have the greatest respect for Mr Samuel Bailey,* but I am of opinion that he has done nothing of the kind. It is true Mr George Combe’s account of the organ of Ideality is rather

* And I sometimes agree with him. For instance, I think upon the theory of vision he is right, and Berkeley and Mr Mill wrong.

widely phrased ; but who has yet succeeded in determining the precise *differentia* of poetry ? Whether I have myself any hopes of ever determining it or not,* one thing is clear to me, as far as I have carried the scrutiny, namely, that it is right, and *not* wrong—though Mr Bailey thinks it is—to rank under this heading of Ideality poetry, enthusiasm, and the love of the perfect. At first, I could not for the life of me guess in what particular Mr Combe (whom I have already said I do not greatly admire) had *tripped* in his description of the function ; but, after a little thought, it occurred to me that people use the word enthusiasm in very different senses. Most people would call any man who displayed an absorbed persistence in the pursuit of an end an enthusiast ; and be it so. But, evidently, Mr Combe employed the word enthusiasm with a more restricted, and yet intenser meaning. He had in his mind, assuredly, absorbed persistence with a fire in it, for an end supposed to be noble ; such persistency as that of Shelley, or any one who sees an end in a dignified and beautiful light, and pursues it by elevated paths. Such an enthusiast, whatever his purpose, leads a poetic life

* Since this was written, I believe I have succeeded, but must defer to another place the result of my completed scrutiny.

and the mood in which his enthusiasm subsists is, in truth, the mood of the poet, and contains most distinctly the *differentia* of poetry. Hard enough would it be to frame a formula which should include Crabbe and Shelley; but the thing is to be done, and, once found, I predict that the formula will include, without solecism, poetry, “enthusiasm,” and the love of the perfect.

Upon the subject of the organ of Conscientiousness, you have, if my recollection serves me accurately, considerable difficulty. Here, again, I feel satisfied about the cranioscopy. Mr Combe’s account of the function may pass, but it is not good. It seems to me that it is *veracity*, in the sense in which I have elsewhere explained that word—a sense which includes all the commoner forms of “justice;” for it is essential to my own veracity, (or to my being in true relations,) that I should not hinder that of others. Your difficulty as to intellectual veracity does not weigh with me. *That* is not felt as a common need, because high intelligence is not common. Wherever intellectual veracity *is* felt as a need of life, I should expect to find large Causality and large Conscientiousness; and I am satisfied my expectation would be fulfilled.

It may be observed in this place, that, of course, the action of Conscientiousness is very often simulated by the conjoint action of the instincts of veneration, of Society, and of conformity, or Order.

With respect to this last organ, I have always felt severely the pressure of the psychological difficulties you urge afresh upon the phrenologists; but, once more, the cranioscopy seems to me to be ascertained, and the function—namely, that of regularity—sufficiently, though loosely, recognisable.

That you should find any difficulty in admitting the alleged *differentia* of the organ of Benevolence, does also, I confess, puzzle me. Nothing in human character is, to my vision, more clearly distinguishable than the action of this faculty, sometimes apart from that of Adhesiveness or Attachment, sometimes in concert with it. There are cold-hearted, unfriendly people who are benevolent, and there are affectionate, sociable people who are *not* benevolent. I have not the shadow of a doubt of the correctness of Phrenology in these particulars.

It strikes me that you yourself, more liberal in your methods than Mr Bailey, have laid too much stress, in your criticisms, upon crude phraseology. An organ

of "Love of Life" is to you inconceivable, if my memory serves me. So it is to me; but not a "faculty" whose precise function, however difficult to state, may provisionally be represented by that phrase. Generally speaking, I may observe that, as hinted by me at the beginning, I accept, provisionally, all the phrenological "organs;" except the cranioscopy, with the reserve as to *power*; and, while feeling satisfied that there are, strictly speaking, no separate faculties, am content to accept, also provisionally, the terminology which presupposes the separation.

If there is anything more to which I would take the liberty of calling your attention, as having at all a crucial character, it is what Phrenology has to say of the organs of Individuality and Eventuality. What you say about them is not in my recollection; but you could hardly fail to think that the psychology is crude. Nevertheless, we can make out what is meant when people talk of a noun-faculty, and a verb-faculty; and I do not think I know anything more striking, in the same order of facts, than the difference in the central region of the forehead between the head of an adult and a child. The phrenologist says, plausibly enough, that the child has all his "first facts" to get together, and that this part of his brain is large while

the process is going on. "Pray, stick, beat ox; ox wont toss dog; dog wont worry cat; cat wont scratch pig,"—and so forth—the noun and the verb in simplest succession and combination—that is the child's delight when you talk to him; and it symbolises what he has to master in those *lehr-jahre* when the world is new to him. And never a day passes upon which I have not to notice that the heads of children are particularly prominent as compared with those of grown persons, at the "organs" of Individuality (noun) and Eventuality (verb.)

I have never wondered, as some have done, that phrenology, or any system of physiognomy, has done so little; my wonder is rather that so much has been accomplished. Let it be considered how difficult it is to get two persons to agree upon such a comparatively simple question as resemblance in the head or face of a third person to that of a fourth. Let it be considered that in every single instance you have probably to deal with the ancestral *characteristique*,—the *characteristique* proper of the individual, or expression of his congenital tendencies,—and also the indications of his acquired tendencies. Let it be considered how indications superinduced upon the original basis by changing fortunes, by happy or unhappy loves, by dis-

loyalty to ideals, and by “circumstances” in general, traverse that original basis in almost every case. Let it be considered that no two human beings agree in their acceptations of the commonest moral and metaphysical words and phrases. And then let it be considered, lastly, that that “character” of a man for which the “science” must earmark every single external sign, is neither more nor less than a total generalisation (anticipated) from every act of the man’s life; and it is easy to account for the slowness of our progress in any art of predicting character from external signs. But, in any case, I must assert that I have found “cranioscopy” to have a real practical value; and that I think the performances, in the way of diagnosis, of “trading” phrenologists who have no more notion of psychological difficulties than this paper, are well deserving of the attention of psychologists.

Your criticisms upon the *defects* of the organology —upon what it leaves unaccounted for—I may pass over. Not only do I agree with the greater part of them, (if my recollection of them be correct,) but surely a great many phrenologists have, to a large extent, anticipated them. If I were to say only a part of what presents itself to me upon the general question, I

should write a book as large as your own. Other duties call me away from any such task, and I will now take leave to make a brief comment upon a remark of yours which I remember in your work on "The Emotions and the Will," though it has nothing to do with Phrenology.

It was, I think, with special reference to Love, that you observed in that excellent book, that "it seems to be the tendency of certain emotions to create around them a heated atmosphere." The quotation is from memory, but it does not wrong you. My comment is this:—Of the fact there can be no doubt. Certain feelings *do* heat the atmosphere. And this happy figure of speech points the mind (as I insist) to the whole horizon of mystery, and admits the insoluble element in the problem of life. No analysis can get rid of this "heated atmosphere." In it, the "*splendide mendax* of self-sacrifice," to which you refer elsewhere, becomes the highest truth possible under imperfect conditions. When the fire of present and immediate emotion has died out, the "heated atmosphere" survives in the common consciousness, and in its inscrutable warmth the infinite ideas become influential. To announce the fact of the existence of this "heated

atmosphere" as a product of emotion, is another way of saying that the efficient cause appears disproportioned to the result. Science may refuse to entertain any indeterminate conclusion that proposes to fill up the gap between; but one is glad to get from her these casual admissions, at every turn, of the incessant pressure of the Mystery of the incalculable Excess which surrounds life with a belt of infinite suggestion, and is the realm of pious emotion in all its different kinds. In the "Thorndale" of Mr Smith, I remember Secken-dorf, the scientific seepie, tells an anecdote about a man blazing up sublimely over a trifle as he was being led out to be shot,—a striking story, which, when I read it, recalled to my mind your "heated atmosphere." My only surprise was, that the accomplished author of "The Conflict of Opinion" did not make one of the other disputants turn the suggestions of the anecdote to some account in the discussion.

H. H.

TO

ARTHUR HELPS, Esq.,
CLERK TO HER MAJESTY'S PRIVY COUNCIL.

A MONG living minds yours is one of the most hospitable,—the most ready to reconsider things,—and yet one of the most gentle and moderate in the assertion of what the world will take for new. You have, it seems to me, a “peculiar appreciation of the irrationality, and difficulty to manage, of mankind;”* and a quietly humorous way of taking it for granted, which communicates a great charm to all your advocacy, and saves it from some of that ineffectiveness for popular purposes, which may plausibly be supposed to attach to the writing of a man like Mr Mill; who, whether contemptuous or not, will always be called so by the “British Philistine.”† The kindly impartiality

* In “Companions of my Solitude,” chapter xii., Dunsford applies this to Milverton and the late Sir Robert Peel in company.

† A hint, in “Companions of my Solitude,” may very well be quoted here, for the sake of its application to the question which is

of your mind, asserting itself in a manner which is as gentle as summer rain, must, I fancy, do enormous good in this sad, puzzling world of ours. And nothing appears to be beyond the reach of your allowance. In 1851 you said you had a suspicion that some of the Roman emperors had been maligned, and felt sure that if it were so, somebody would one day grub up the subject and give your suspicion a voice. While I write this, I am told the thing has been done by an acute and independent thinker, and that Nero is quite rehabilitated.

A cause has just been heard before the Privy Council, (Advocate-General of Bengal, appellant, and Ranee Surnomoyee, respondent,) in which the question related to the forfeiture of the property of a wealthy Hindoo, who had, in a fit of religious fervour, thrown himself under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut, and so perished. I did not hear the argument before the

agitated at this moment, whether Mr Mill shall have a seat in Parliament. After a reference to "Peerages for Life," I find the following:—"And so, again, of official seats in the House of Commons what a benefit it would be if just men could be put there occasionally, whom the world would be glad to listen to, but whom a constituency will not listen to, or who are not in a position to ask it to listen."—ED.

Lords of the Council,—in which I am informed the subject of “suicide” in general was discussed,—but the fragments which have reached me of what did pass, have turned my thoughts to the shallowness of public opinion upon the subject of suicide, and the defects of the actual law, which I cannot think is anything but demoralising and unjust.*

I am not going to trouble *you* with commonplaces about the sacredness of life, and the undoubted fact that life is *held* sacred in proportion as men improve; but we may call to mind that wherever there is suicide allowed, there is, I believe, infanticide allowed. If in modern Europe we had been in the habit of dispensing with weakly-looking babes as soon as born, because there seemed no chance of their living or being of any good to the world, we should have had neither Goethe nor Victor Hugo. Of all the concomitants of what is called progress, not one is more striking than this of the increased and ever-increasing value which human life assumes. Not only is the destruction of it regarded with a deep-seated

* Since this was written,—and I believe my friend was the first person who, of late years, has publicly discussed the question,—the whole topic has been taken up by others; but it still waits a complete and deliberate discussion.—ED.

disapprobation, but it comes to be made the most of even in its very lowest forms. We hold ourselves bound to assist the idiot in the utmost possible development of his poor little spark of the sacred fire; and well we may, for our reward may be incalculably great. It might be asked, Why should not the world have dispensed with Laura Bridgman, the blind deaf-mute? Why should she choose continued life, or why should it be chosen for her? Yet her wonderful intellect, and strong, bright nature, have, in spite of limitations which appear to turn life into no-life, pushed our notions of human possibilities immeasurably farther forward, and conquered new land from doubt, and mystery, and dread. Any one who thinks his life is worth nothing, or who feels sure that its productiveness is at an end, may well pause, and reflect that it may be precisely worth, for what he knows—a new miracle to guide and cheer his fellow-creatures.

In all this you would, no doubt, agree with me, only you would say it better. But it is just possible you may have, what I have not, something practical to say, of a positive nature, concerning the treatment of suicide by the law. At present, I am only clear upon one point—that the present treatment of it is altogether wrong. The present European feeling about the sin

is of ecclesiastical origin, and has reference to the horror which was formerly felt if a man died without extreme unction. One obtains a glimpse of the same feeling in the petition put up in the Litany against "sudden death."* As for the working of the law, perjury is committed by jurymen in nine-tenths of the cases of suicide that come before them. Should that be so? The personal property of a *felo de se* is forfeited to the Crown. Should *that* be so? The strange part of it is, that though the will of a *felo de se* is void as to his goods and chattels, his landed estate may pass as he has bequeathed it. But the whole subject is in a curious condition; and it is not doing the world a bad service to let them know what difficulties beset questions which they are accustomed to consider unembarrassed.

The taking away of one man's life by *another* is, by the law of England, either murder, manslaughter, or justifiable homicide. But do these categories meet all possible cases? In *Notes and Queries*, I find the following anecdote:—"In the year 1793, an aged peasant whose cabin neighboured my residence, lay *in extremis*, lovingly tended by his wife and daughter.

* Which is in some Nonconforming churches, where the Prayer Book is used, altered to "unprepared death."

The Christmas Eve was nearing its close, and they religiously believed that, should he pass away at its synchronism with the Christmas morning, he would escape purgatory, and directly enter Paradise. The church clock began to strike twelve. The wife took the bolster from under the dying man's head, and pressed it down on his face ; the daughter seated herself on his breast, and their purpose was accomplished, no secret being made of the deed—no wonder manifested—no notice taken."

The teller of the story naturally goes on to ask :—“Was this a murder? So far from possessing murder's primary condition—malice—it was done in all affection and piety. The husband and father could not survive another hour ; a moment's quickened suffering would secure to him (so these simple women imagined) a painless eternity.”

Manifestly this was not murder *at common law*, because it was not malicious killing ; but, unless I am mistaken, to aid and abet in suicide is by statute made murder ; and under some such heading, the act in question might, perhaps, be classified, on the ground that the dying man himself would have solicited it, if he had had the forethought. With regard to the man himself, it would, taking that view of it, be a case of

suicide, by the hand of another, with a religious motive, and would take rank with that of a Hindoo widow *voluntarily* submitting to be burned.

The case of Thuggee is different. No man can logically claim a religious right to slay another against his will. It is not persecution to hang the devoutest Thug; for all question of rights presupposes a common right to existence; and, that being denied, we are thrown upon the simple aboriginal dilemma of force against force.

But now, supposing the old man, in the case just quoted, had objected to be put to death, and had still been smothered, what right of his would have been violated? The right of self-preservation—his right to his own life—his right to do what he pleased with it, so long as he deprived nobody else of the same right; the right, in fact, which is the very first postulate of moral science. But if we admit the (political) right of self-preservation, how can we possibly deny the (political) right of self-destruction? If this Hindoo had left his wife and children chargeable to the State, the State might have complained. But, on the contrary, he left property behind him, and the State fought for it! I suppose the reason that the law would assign for confiscating the personality of a man who commits

felo de se is that of discouraging a crime ; but supposing a man leaves behind him no one chargeable to others, and supposing he leaves the means of burying him, and of paying for the labour incurred in doing so, it is hard to say what *crime* he commits, however great the sin ; and it is certainly a questionable thing to punish those whom he leaves behind him by taking forcible possession of what he had acquired.

Whether it is right or not for the Crown to appropriate the goods of *any* felon, is a question which will have to be considered some day.* I am bold to say it is wrong ; and the case of the suicide is peculiarly open to doubt. I am not able to suggest any sort of legal influence which might be brought to bear upon persons contemplating self-destruction ; but the confiscation in question is very disputable policy, to go no further. The posthumous indignities which used to attend the burial of suicides, and perhaps may still, have, I suppose, very little deterring effect, if any.

It is not to be supposed that coroners' jurymen in general think much of principles ; and I speak with knowledge, having myself "served" my country on such juries. But they are like the rest of us, and do

* Since Mr Holbeam wrote and first printed this, an attempt has been made to revise this law of forfeiture.—ED.

not like to be "hard upon" the survivors in a case of suicide, whatever they may think. Certainly, if they *did* trouble themselves about principles, they might be puzzled by cases which seem to knock principles to atoms. What juryman would have returned a verdict of *felo de se*, if he had had to sit upon your own beautiful, good OULITA? One might refer to the story of the Round Tower of Jhansi; or to the case of Arnold Winkelried, rushing upon the Austrian spears,—or to the case of the Scotch soldier, who, to avoid being tortured by his Red Indian captors, assured them that he had made his skull tomahawk-proof by a particular herb; and so, inviting them to try, got killed out of hand, instead of being scalped and roasted *sec. art.*,—or to a hundred cases in which life, if not directly attacked by the owner of it, is deliberately *risked* for an end which an outsider thinks insufficient.

Even while I am thinking all this over, such a case has occurred in the melancholy Aston Park story, which has provoked a noble letter from the QUEEN. A pregnant woman having been killed by a fall from a tight rope, her Majesty has been pleased to express to the Mayor of Birmingham her horror at the character and sequel of the accident, and her hope

that feats of trivial daring, such as led to the death of this unfortunate creature, under circumstances so truly pathetic, may be discontinued. This is as it should be ; but instantly there arises a clamour for “legislative interposition,” and my fellow-subject, the Mayor of Birmingham, in acknowledging her Majesty’s letter, gives utterance to a hope that Parliament may interfere to “put down” tight-rope feats of a dangerous character. Now this is as it should *not* be. Only in a land where the watchword of men was “Hands off!” could be felt, down to the very centre, so light a touch as that laid by the QUEEN’s hand upon the popular impulse. But that the British Philistine does not understand. All he thinks about is “putting down” whatever is incomprehensible to him. His antipathy to suicide is founded, in great part, upon the impossibility under which he labours of comprehending how a man should be willing to give up a continuance in what seems ordinary and “proper”—dinner, brandy-and-water, seeing Jones, making money, and being complimented at vestry meetings. That any creature going on two legs should want to retire from this paradisiacal sort of existence seems to him so truly pathetic, that, whether the man is mad or not, he is such an object of compassion that he ought not to be

called a *felo de se*, or any other bad name. The same poverty of imagination which prevents his seeing that X may have motives of action different from those of Q, and yet be sane, prevents his discerning that the difficulties into which he would get himself by legislating against people running risks which might end in self-destruction, are even greater than those which attend the working of the law of suicide. Should the proposed Act of Parliament against rope-dancing specify the height from the ground at which a rope may be traversed by a gymnast? the proper width from bar to bar in trapèze performances? May a private citizen stretch a cord between props in his back garden, and call his neighbours in? May boys go a bird's-nesting? Shall there be a department of public and private recreation, or an inspector of cricket fields and nursery games? Shall the figures of quadrilles be regulated, and the number of whirls in a waltz? And if not, why not? because we have repeatedly seen accounts of women dropping dead in ball-rooms. Or where shall the line be drawn? Should only blindfold feats be forbidden? If so, should it not be made penal for any one to sell a sack without asking if it is intended to be used by a gymnast? What is to be done with Alpine clubs and explorers of dangerous countries? Supposing the claims

of “science” to be urged in their behalf, what answer is to be made to any ingenious person who maintains that “science” is concerned in knowing the extreme limits of the difficulties under which human beings can move blindfold through the air, like Spallanzani’s mutilated bats? Finally, ought we not, in common consistency, to pass a vote of retrospective execration, applying to all expeditions in search of a North-West passage, and send out one more to raze the monumental cairns to Bellot and Franklin?

But all that is suggested by criticism of this kind is so obvious that it need not be pressed for a moment. I observe that a sailor has just been clambering up to the top of Sir Walter Scott’s monument in Edinburgh, and playing off at that dizzy height tricks fraught with danger. What possible legislation could provide against such cases? But if it be right that the whole of a man’s personal property should be forfeited to the Crown in case of *felo de se*, it is certainly right that some portion of it should be forfeited in a case where he has culpably put his own life in danger. In old days there used to be a “deodand” on any inanimate thing which had been concerned in the killing of a man; and there was a certain beauty about that. But who would draw up for an Act of Parliament a

schedule of per centages of forfeiture on quasi-suicidal risks? Yet the same law which makes suicide a *crime* ought to punish Milton for blinding himself. If a man's life belongs to the State, so does any portion of it.

The fact is, there is, on the whole, nothing moral or in any way noble about the impulse which usually originates the outcry for more law; and here we approach a topic upon which Mr Mill, though he has made himself heard and understood by a certain limited portion of the intelligence of the day, has only said what glances, like water from a duck's back, off the minds of even the cultivated essay-reading public. But you who have more humour, more tact, more patience in playing with the moods of men, and kindlier ways of "getting round" them, might take up the theme with surely the happiest effect. It has been said by Mr Mill that the impulses towards freedom which began in modern times with the Reformation seem now to have spent their last forces, and that liberty is about to be called upon to encounter a new and desperate peril; what threatens it now being the petty absolutism, not of Popes and Kaisers, but of half-instructed crowds, the Lilliputian tyranny of multitudes who know not

what they seek. Indeed, whatever progress modern Europe may be supposed to have made, it is only here and there a few who have really grasped the bare axioms of civil freedom. Free trade the multitude understand, (more or less,) because they have been persuaded that their interests are bound up in it. Religious freedom they also understand, (more or less;) but even that is imperfectly comprehended. In a recent number of a leading newspaper, which contained a letter from a rope-dancer upon this very Aston Park story, it is said in a leading article that, "within reasonable limits, we have learnt to let men's religious convictions look after themselves." Need it be pointed out that the mere use of the clause, "within reasonable limits," destroys the value of the rest? It would, in fact, justify *any* kind or degree of persecution; for it leaves to the ruling power the right of determining what limits are reasonable; the multitude being always ready enough to prompt the ruling power. The only notion of right possessed by my good friend over the way is something which somebody else ought to be made to do. He likes to assert his power. He likes to force his "principles" on other people. The simplest way of asserting power is, of course, to knock a man down. Another way is to get an Act of Par-

liament passed, and then my friend has the pleasure of feeling all the power of the State on the side of his own ideas, and of compelling other people to do as he chooses.

Of the theory of government which delights my friend over the way, (so long as it does not interfere with "shop,") the law which deals with suicide as a breach of religious duty—a quality which specifically sets it aside for *ecclesiastical* treatment—is a remnant. An Act of Parliament to prevent people risking their lives at their own pleasure, would be a retrograde step accommodated to the same theory. As if the natural penalty was not severe enough for nature's own ends ! In exactly the same spirit of interference with what is utterly outside of the scope of civil control, a too-considerable public is now clamouring for the thin end of the wedge of a law which should prevent a man's risking his own life by excessive drinking. The theory of social rights upon which legislation such as that sought to be carried out by an Alliance Liquor Law has been by Mr Mill held up to the scorn of thinking people in these powerful words :—"A theory of social rights," says he, "the like of which probably never before found its way into distinct language, being nothing short of this—that it is the absolute social

right of every individual that every other individual shall act in every respect exactly as he ought ; that whosoever fails thereof in the smallest particular violates my social right, and entitles me to demand from the legislature the removal of the grievance. *So monstrous a principle is far more dangerous than any single interference with liberty ; there is no violation of liberty which it would not justify ;* it acknowledges no right to any freedom whatever, except, perhaps, to that of holding opinions in secret without ever disclosing them : for the moment an opinion which I consider noxious passes any one's lips, it invades all the 'social rights' attributed to me by the Alliance. The doctrine ascribes to all mankind a vested interest in each other's moral, intellectual, and even physical perfection, to be defined by each claimant according to his own standard."

It is surely a wretched omen that this doctrine of mutual vested interest should be, in our own days, so rife as it really is, and on many sides so menacing ; when *two centuries ago it was thought impossible of adoption* by Milton :

" What more foul, common sin amongst us than drunkenness ? And who can be ignorant that if the importation of wine, and the use of all strong drink, were forbid, it would

both clean rid the possibility of committing that odious vice, and men might afterwards live happily and healthfully without the use of those intoxicating liquors ? Yet who is there, the severest of them all, that ever propounded to lose his sack, his ale, toward the certain abolishing of so great a sin ? Who is there of them, the holiest, that less loves his rich canary at meals, though it be fetched from places that hazard the religion of them who fetch it, and though it make his neighbour drunk out of the same tun ? They forbid not the use of that liquid merchandise, which, forbidden, would utterly remove a loathsome sin, and not impair either the health or the refreshment of mankind, supplied many other ways. To remove a national vice a man will not pardon his cups, nor think it concerns him to forbear the quaffing of that outlandish grape, in his unnecessary fulness, though other men abuse it never so much ; nor is he so abstemious as to intercede with the magistrate, that all matter of drunkenness be banished the Commonwealth."

It is poor consolation that these blind men, leaders and led, know not what they ask, or into what ditch they are hurrying,—do not know that every one of the clamourers for legal restrictions upon the sale of strong drinks, the use of the tight-rope, and a score of other matters, is walking upon a line which has no proper terminus short of the rack, the stake, and the thumbscrew. But I wish you would come to the rescue ! Whatever you say will be welcome to the world, and will do it good ; for your graceful modulation of manner is, in itself, a power. Beginning with

a case of deliberate, religious self-immolation brought before the Privy Council, I have taken the liberty of passing in review cases in which life is hastily risked, and in which life is slowly injured, at the choice of the living agents themselves. In the case of the suicide, I have said that the law, as it actually stands, appears to me to be injurious; in the other cases, attempts are made to procure laws which would be injurious, if enacted. My impression is, that you would allot to Government a larger share than I should in that policy of Divine Expediency by which the thing called national welfare is realised. But the intermediate word is sometimes the very word that is needful to be spoken; and upon the Method of Life you could not, I feel certain, speak an ineffective or unwelcome one. Upon the claims of that individual inner sense of preferability which one can only with difficulty get a mob to understand, you might, I think, say persuasive words better than almost any living man. Such words are sadly wanted. These crowds think of things solely as they fancy they see they affect *them*. Only the other day this kind of talk passed between an acquaintance and myself :—

He. “But you would destroy society !”

I. “Well ?”

He. "Well, indeed ! Society must exist."

I. "*Je n'en vois pas la nécessité.*"

He. "Why, we couldn't live alone, like solitary beasts!"

I. "Certainly not. I now perceive you mean that Lord Switchtail's measure, pushed as far as it would go, would destroy *this particular form of society*. But what then ? How do you know it isn't intended to be destroyed ? Why not ? Society has, in fact, existed, does now exist, with order as complete as ours, under every conceivable variety of rule and regimen, from the Land's End to Japan, and from Baffin's Bay to Peru. So that (1) there is no presumption, really, that my Lord Switchtail's bill would do any but a little temporary evil ; and (2) if it did, that is not necessarily an argument against it. For if one man may be bound to die for a principle, why not ten ? ten thousand ? ten million ?"

At this climax, my friend blinked at space, and we changed the subject. But he was just like the man you quote, in your last series of Friends in Council,— "Everybody eats mustard ; and, confound it, sir, you shall have mustard !" Lately, some good-natured men have been setting on foot a movement for working men's clubs. Immediately there is a hue-and-cry

about the “domestic hearth.” It never appears to cross the mind of the critic that, though club-life competing with domestic life may often do mischief, yet the transitional institution of club-life may lie in the path to a better ideal of domestic life. In fact, it does not enter into his head that domestic life *could* be anything better than it is. He has the same kind of dislike to anything new, that your “witty friend” L——’s autocrat of the condiment had to a man who ate beef without mustard to please himself,—the same objection that an ignorant servant-girl has to do anything in a way she “never saw before, mem,”—the same objection that the British Philistine had to the first umbrella that was ever hoisted. You, sir, have done much for social welfare with that always felicitous and persuasive pen of yours. Pray try your hand where so many have failed, (of course one alludes to that, *pour encourager les autres*,) and make the British Philistine understand that he belongs to himself, as well as to his fellow-creatures; and that for Parliament to try and prevent his walking on his hands, or drinking aqua-vitæ, could only end in his walking on his head, and drinking aqua-fortis. To amend the law of suicide would be to make a beginning; for it would be to recognise that though

self-destruction is what a man must answer to God for, his fellow-citizens have no such business with it that they should be entitled to call him names after his death, or authorise the sovereign to appropriate his money.*

H. H.

* I do not mean to deny absolutely that there *may* be, in relation to such matters, something for Divine Expediency to do. That was, *perhaps*, not a bad law which checked suicide among women (when it was a mania) by declaring that their corpses should be exposed without reserve. Again, since we were in India by our own wrong, we may have been bound to put down *suttee*. But, since I believe God rules the world, I think that if we had never invaded India, and missionaries had gone, with their lives in their hands,—trusting in God *only*,—to dissuade from *suttee*, the result *might* have been immediately better; *must* have been finally better; and would have been more pleasing to the Divine eye.

TO

MATTHEW ARNOLD, Esq.,
PROFESSOR OF POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

FOR me, sitting down to write this, it is, perhaps, unlucky that you should dislike "emphasis," while I am so fond of it. You, I am persuaded, would write even verse without accent, if you could : and sometimes you do.

But for all that you are a poet ; and for all my love of emphasis, I have been, for some years, an affectionate student of your poetry,—how affectionate a student of it you would scarcely believe if I were to tell you. Since you have taken to prose criticism, beyond the limits of your prefaces, I have read your prose too ; greatly honouring its dignified calmness, its tranquil lucidity, its delicate "sanity" of judgment, its noble preparedness for great conclusions ; but feeling, I will add, greatly exasperated by its gentlemanly perversity, its coldly coquettish reserves, and nicety of inconsequence.

When I first became acquainted with your poetry, I admired and loved its severe simplicity, its superiority to *effect*, its disdain of burnt cork, blue fire, and modern artifice of all degrees. But I thought it strangely wanting in accentuation,—using that word both as a metaphor and in its plainer meaning. If I were writing a criticism upon it, that peculiarity alone would yield me matter for more pages than this letter will contain; but let me now say that it always had, for me, a fascination which a rhythm more marked and distinct might very well fail to exert on the mind. Never, said I to myself, was there a Muse with so even and soundless a footfall as this: but she keeps you listening, charmed and attentive, even when she has withdrawn into absolute silence away.

But now, in your prefaces, and in the substance of the poems themselves, I found the same quality, the same intellectual quietism, the same aspiration after “sanity,” “tranquillity,” “a spirit free from mists, and sane, and clear,”* and sometimes, I fancied, a dragging-in of “tranquillity” and moderation, when the story would have been better without it. In the “Sick King in Bokhara,” we have a man who was

* Poems, (Second Series,) p. 176, “Obermann”—and see almost *any* page of Mr Arnold’s poetry.

stoned to death for cursing his mother ; but the king's criticism is surely irrelevant :—

“Thou wert a sinner, thou poor man !
Thou wert athirst, and didst not see
That, though we snatch what we desire,
We may not snatch it eagerly.”

I might carry this sort of comment much further, with, I think, some entertainment and a little instruction to readers not accustomed to remember minutely, and “put this and that together”—but I forbear, for I cannot tell what pain I might give you, what “noble nerve” I might “touch too close,” if I analysed your two volumes of poems in print as narrowly as I have analysed them in my own mind, in the course of frequent meditation upon what so charmed me.

There was, however, in your poems another source of fascination ; for I could not fail to discern in them a quick sense of *fatality*, and a longing for *unity* or control. I have said years ago to a friend,—with your volume in my hand,—This man should be either a Buddhist or a Roman Catholic. That was a crude thing to say, but the insight upon which it was founded was just. For, now, your prose writings seem to me to disclose a bent in your mind towards “centrality,”

which, in men of moods less patient, inevitably leads to Roman Catholicism.

It happens that my own bent is away from centrality in every direction ; but, if you should cast your eye over other papers of mine which are in the hands of the editor of this book, I think you will scarcely accuse me of any tendency to underrate the worth of “independent” and “irrespective criticism ;” of any prejudice against what you, I think improperly, call “transcendentalism ;” or of any unwillingness to remain in the “sphere of ideas.” Yet I must tell you that I am, on the whole, inclined to be sorry that you have taken to essay-writing, and that warmly agreeing with you upon most literary questions,—most matters of taste—I find you as a thinker, perverse and uncertain even to exasperation. The manner in which, to use a household metaphor, you “lay the cloth” for discussing a subject, is, I think, admirable, and always the taste of your writing is exquisite ; but when you have prepared your reader’s mind for what he hopes will be a strenuous consideration of the topic, you seem to me to go off into *remarks* ; in tone beautiful, but in logic indiscriminating ; and leading, at last, to nowhere in particular. “To try and approach truth on one side after another—not to strive or cry, not to

persist in pressing forward on any one side with violence or self-will—it is not only thus that mortals may hope to gain any vision of the mysterious goddess." That is what you say ; and it is true, and beautifully spoken ; but what is it that you *do* ? I fear it is "provincial" of me to write it ; but it appears to me that Mr Matthew Arnold walks round his subject in felt slippers,—sticks it all over with little silver pins of poetic half-epigram,—whispers, "hush ! hush ! no violence, if you want the Truth!"—and then, suddenly, though quietly, snatches the reader up a blind alley. *He* feels that he has been reading some very elegant *remarks* ; but he has to shut up the book empty-handed.

I could not, of course, even if it would be right, criticise all your essays in detail ; but before attempting (as I shall do) to indicate the points in which I fancy I see you are *fundamentally* mistaken, I may, perhaps, be forgiven if I lay my finger upon one or two of your "remarks," which are what I call perverse.

When you look at the shelves of Catholic literature in the library at the British Museum, you are, you say, struck with a sense of dignity and universality which the Protestant shelves do not convey to your mind. You think of all the pell-mell of Shakespeare's men

and women, (I quote from memory,) and not of sects, or separate cliques, or teachers. Well,—to say nothing of the fact that there is an illusion here, there being quite as much *real* diversity within the Church of Rome as out of it,—what does the remark amount to? If you were in the gallery of antiquities at the same Museum, I suppose you might be reminded of all the pell-mell of Homer's men and women; or of the pell-mell of the men and women of Egypt, and have just as keen a sense of unity—*why not?*—and, since youth is a fault which mends in time, and Protestant doctrine has not been longer in growing than Roman Catholic doctrine was,—might it not be supposed that a future Arnold, looking at the Protestant shelves, when distance in time should have mellowed diversities and spread a softening mist over what is now so *jutting* and so hard to your eye, might have sensations similar to yours when you look at those Catholic shelves, which seem to have fascinated you so? This is a kind of “remark” which is, in my opinion, mischievous. It is the mere registration of a passing fancy, which has no life in it, which leads no whither, and might be discussed for ever in vain. *As a fancy,* it could do no harm, but introduced among opinions and left to take its chance, it does harm to acquiescent

minds which never analyse their impressions ; such minds as belong to the majority even of *your* readers.

What you have observed of the vulgarities of passing literature, its want of "sanity," and its straining after effect, is, I think, most useful, and very finely said. But your analysis and your remedy surprise me beyond measure. They are both, to my mind, perverse. The faults of literary manner which you condemn are, to my thinking, not "provincialism," to be remedied by such "centrality" as an "Academy" could encourage, but faults of insincerity, to be remedied by each writer considering, within himself, what the subject requires of him, and not how he can hit hard and say fine things. The "centrality" and freedom from "provincialism" of French literature, appear to me to be purchased at the expense of sincerity. Surely so delicate an ear as yours cannot help catching the accent of cynicism which is heard, if ever so remotely, in much of that very delightful French writing which you so much admire ? I confess I should be most unwilling to miss the directness of the English manner, with its ready adaptability to truthfulness, and to receive in exchange the charming ingenuities of the manner of our neighbours even at its best. This, however, is a question of taste, and I pass on to

more important matters—matters in which I think it of the very utmost consequence that you should be publicly criticised, because I think your writing mischievous and misleading to the general reader.

The following, for example, is, in my opinion, very pernicious:—"I have never been able to hit it off happily with my friends the logicians. . . . They imagine truth something to be proved, I something to be seen. . . . I have a profound respect for intuitions, and a very lukewarm respect for the elaborate machine-work of my friends." Now, the acquiescent reader will carry away from this passage some vague impression against logic, and in favour of intuitions, and he will be sure to quote it in the wrong place, being simply confirmed in his old blundering way of looking at things. Forgive me if I affirm that truth is something to be seen *and* proved. The eye may sometimes flash along whole line of thought, and "see" it at a glance; but the fact that I "see" truth is not an indication that it cannot be proved; it is an indication that it *can* be proved. Hence, however vividly I can myself "see" a truth, I am never easy until I *have* "hit it off happily with my friends the logicians"—and verified my "intuition" by proof. And I no more understand the contrary frame of mind than I

understand your notion of what are “the prescriptions of reason, absolutely unchanging and of universal validity;” or your notion of the *process* by which such “prescriptions” must be applied to practice.

This brings me to what you are so fond of referring to—“the sphere of ideas.”

There are two ways in which we may speak of the ideal. There is the concrete image formed in the poetic mind—which is what the vulgar call “mere romance;” and there is the abstract formula which is the result of analysis. Either of these belongs to the sphere of ideas, and neither can be realised in practice. But the first is a living thing, with warmth and action in it; the second a merely statical conception, a skeleton without pulse or breath. I cannot help fancying that your mind slides about between the two things, without your being conscious of its movement? One perfectly understands that, contemplating the “ideal” in the first sense, that of beautiful and perfect life, you should find some things very “hideous,” and that you should address an avowal of your disgust to people’s hearts, tastes, and consciences. But when, forsaking “irrespective criticism,” you drop down to very difficult practical questions, I lose the thread of your meaning. What *can* you be up to? I am not

myself a Benthamist, (though I don't *oppose* practical Benthamism, and usually find myself at one with it,) but I certainly think your Benthamist critics have here got the better of you, and left you without an inch of ground to stand upon.

Forsaking the sphere of "irrespective criticism," you have, descending to practice, chosen your own illustration, and used it freely. All that you have to say in abuse of the British Philistine I heartily agree with ; only you come to just the opposite conclusion, after all, to the one everybody would expect ; and you fall into at least one grave error of fact.

It would certainly seem very absurd if a man were to go to the Bankruptcy Court, and come away indignant, observing that after *that* he might perhaps "be permitted to find the (Roman Catholic or some other) idea of" perpetual solvency "refreshing." We should naturally exclaim, What does he mean ? Does he mean that people ought to be maintained to be honest and solvent when they are neither ? Or does he simply mean, if you press him hard, that he is scandalised by having the details of dishonesty and insolvency thrust under his eyes ; that he wishes such details made matter of record accessible to students, but not laid upon his table whether he will or no ?

Again let me venture to say, you cannot accuse me of any tendency to “despise the world of ideas.” You will see, if you turn to what I have written under the heading of the name of Mr Maurice, that the type represented by “that poor girl Wragg” had occupied my mind as well as yours, and, probably, much in the same way. But though we may and certainly should criticise facts in the light of “ideas,” we ought not to be guilty of the practical injustice which must always result from disregarding facts, and dealing with life as if they realised the idea. Now, do I, on any ground, understand you when, after referring to one of our judicial institutions which expressly and solely deals with injustice caused by breaches of “the idea,” you go on to say that because this is “in the ideal sphere so hideous,” (of course it is,) you hope you may be permitted to find “the Catholic idea, which exhibits marriage as indissoluble, refreshing.” I assure you that I do not know any “idea” of “marriage” which you or I are likely to meddle with that does *not* exhibit it as indissoluble. Marriage *is* the indissoluble union of two people in whom the necessary conditions of the union, in all kinds, exist and are maintained. This is not the place for a description of it; but I am quite sure that, if I gave one, I should

satisfy the highest “idea” you ever formed upon the subject; nor have I the smallest objection to calling it a sacrament; nor has any intelligent Protestant that I know of. But it does not follow that marriage exists because it is supposed to exist; or is said to exist; or is registered as existing. And if between the fact and the idea an inveracity is interposed, the civil power which has registered the inveracity just cancels it—that is all. Of course, it is conceivable that if the British Philistine were somewhat less of a Philistine, he might concern himself more with the *conditions*, and less with the *reasons*, of the procedure of the civil power: but you cannot wash your Ethiopian white in a day.

Of course, too, the result is “hideous.” But are we really to understand you to say that the sweetest and most sacred of human relationships fares better in countries where the Roman Catholic practice holds, than in Protestant countries? Or have you forgotten that Rome knows of such a thing as formal “dispensation?” Or have you considered the practical working of “absolutions” given by separate priests to separate wrong-doers from time to time?

One thing I am sure of, namely, that you are in error upon a question of fact, and that, without intend-

ing it, you slander your countrymen when you affirm that the present law “is not the result of any legislator’s meditations on the subject.” If you will turn to the blue-books to which I append a reference,* you will not fail to recognise your mistake. You will perceive that there has been a great deal of “meditation” upon the subject among our “legislators,” from the days of the *Reformatio Legum* downwards. You will find that in the course of the inquiry which led to the recent change in the law, (a change which fell far short of the change recommended in the *most* meditated of all schemes, the *Reformatio Legum*, which only missed becoming law through the death of Edward VI.,) there was plenty of “meditation.” You will find that our “legislators” invited “meditations,” and got them, from men like Cardinal Wiseman, Dr Pusey, and Chief Rabbi Adler. You will find references which will guide you to an enormous literature upon the jurisprudence of the question,—a literature in which

* Reports upon the law of these subjects; printed respectively in 1853 and 1856.

If you must really descend from the sphere of “irrespective criticism” to practical questions, you might, in dealing with this *very* practical question, consider, in their bearing upon your dislike to what is “hideous,” the abortive Bill of Lord Cranworth, (1857;) or the policy of the Jewish community: which you probably know, from its occasionally coming into collision with our laws.

there is even some meditation in the sphere of ideas,—a literature beginning with the “theory” of the first Christians, and coming down to Hume and Paley—illustrious “idealists” whose assistance you may not covet, but who will easily lend it to you if you like. You will find long Reports, which will convince you that our legislators *have* meditated upon the subject; and especially a protest by Lord Redesdale, which will delight you. On the whole, I confess, taunted as I have been, ever since I can remember, with my devotion to the “sphere of ideas,” and my disdain of the practical, I am proud to belong to a country whose legislators are capable of so *much* “meditation” as is shown in these blue-books. I think the tribunals in question showed that they had sound heads, and tender, faithful English hearts. I think they dealt in a kind, thoughtful spirit with most terrible questions. However widely I may differ from the British Philistine, I believe he finds the right track in the long run; and that he may even manage to extract the good out of your Essays, and leave the bad alone.

There is, however, one thing which I hate even worse than Philistinism,—namely, the attempt to found forcible legislation upon ideals; using the word in the first of the two senses in which I have, at the

beginning of this letter, spoken of it. Such legislation is, in my opinion, the business of the Church, and not of the State. There was once a furious and really eloquent anti-Benthamist examined before a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the condition of the Frame-Work Knitters many years ago. His evidence contains some very fine passages, which are weighty and good “in the sphere of ideas;” but, when he descends to practice, he actually proposes, in so many words, that our legislators should pass an Act of Parliament affirming a creed:—“*An Act of Parliament might denounce the modern philosophy in its preamble*, and then proceed to lay down general rules which might put a stop to glaring wrongs.” It rests with you, or with any man who thinks legislators ought to make laws maintaining ideals of life, to show how they can do it without “denouncing” and persecuting too. It is all very well to talk of legislating on an “idea”—but *which* idea? For that “reason” has any “unchanging prescriptions” which are *infallibly applicable, direct, to life and practice*, I positively deny. That anybody can be found to hint at such a thing strikes me with profound sadness; and I think, with awe, how wide may be the gulf, and how impassable, between human

spirits that alike cherish good intent, however else they differ. You, too, have had the same emotion, and beautifully have you rendered it :—

“ Yes, in the sea of life enisled,
 With echoing straits between us thrown,
 Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
 We mortal millions live *alone*.
 The islands feel the enclasping flow,
 And then their endless bounds they know.
 A God, a God their severance ruled ;
 And bade betwixt their shores to be
 The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.”

You will forgive me, I hope, for quoting those verses, and also these, for the comfort they contain :—

“ And though we wear out life, alas,
 Distracted as a homeless wind,
 In beating where we must not pass,
 In seeking what we shall not find.

Yet we shall one day gain, life past,
 Clear prospect o'er our being's whole ;
 Shall see ourselves, and learn at last
 Our true affinities of soul.

We shall not then deny a course,
 To every thought the mass ignore ;
 We shall not then call hardness force,
 Nor lightness wisdom any more.

Then, in the eternal Father's smile,
 Our sooth'd encouraged souls will dare
 To *seem* as free from pride and guile,
 As good, as generous, as they *are*.

Then we shall know our friends : though much
Will have been lost—the help in strife :
The thousand sweet still joys of such
As hand in hand face earthly life."

This, like all that you write when you confine yourself to "the sphere of ideas," is so exquisitely beautiful that I am tempted to pray that you may never again write a line of prose. Even in prose, however, you are delightful, in the same sphere. In the other "sphere" I think you a most dangerous writer. I can scarcely conceive anything more mischievous than the union of a noble and beautiful spirit with a want of strenuousness in thought ; a readiness to take first impressions for "immutable prescriptions of reason ;" and an unwillingness to test "intuitions" by logic. You address your opponents with authoritative assurances that if they will give their minds to a certain kind of "meditation" upon "ideas," certain beneficial results will follow. I will not take the liberty of saying anything authoritative to you ; but I assure you that, if I did not believe that every "intuition" was capable of at least such confirmation from "my logical friends" that it could be shown to be impossible of disproof or exclusion—I should never smile again. Your own scheme of life seems to me to be merely a Toryism of Taste—a form of Expediency which has certainly no

more to do with “*ideas*” than any other. But you are not the only fine spirit known to me in whom the love of order, wedded to gracious *sentiment*, begets rules for other people and christens them principles.

H. H.

Last Words from the Editor.

MY task, as Editor, is now nearly at an end ; nothing remains but that I should endeavour to show, to readers of these papers from my friend's desk, who may care to have it shown to them, that such discussion as they contain is, in itself, a kind of narrative ; places itself in some sort of historic order. One thing I feel sure of, that if there is any repetition, in trifles or in serious things, it is deliberate on the part of Mr Holbeach ; and that, where his illustrations appear too remote in their sweep, he is deliberate also ; though he may have been mistaken upon the question of literary policy. Nor will I omit to repeat, once more, that no disrespect, either to great topics, or great persons, is at all implied in the *dégagée* manner in which he sometimes approaches them. All this is, as he says, *in vacuo* ; and has not one particle of rudeness in it.

In the first volume, we have submitted to us ma-

terials for the history of the social problem as it presented itself to the mind of Mr Holbeach, from first to last. Looking over the first four Studies, I do not at all understand him to mean that terms of "communion," whether for devout or other ends, can ever be reduced to a logical form which shall be final. I simply understand him to protest against the pretence that they *can*. Even our "irrespective" little P. B. Club had to draw the line somewhere—like the barber who would shave anybody *but* a sweep—but, then, said my friend, "We admit that the line is arbitrary; we will widen it upon cause shown; and, in the meantime, since our line, like every other possible line, is avowedly itself a compromise, we hold ourselves ready for casual compromises besides which ignore the line. How can we refuse?" In reading all this, it must be remembered that the problem of the "terms of communion" presented itself to my friend, from the beginning of his life, in unusually arduous shapes.

In *Cavaliers* and *Roundheads*, we may see how keenly his early experience had prepared him to appreciate the distinction between the men who think of rules as the instruments of persons, and the men who think of them as their guides. He insists upon a higher synthesis, in which rules become the instru-

ments of principles; and the antagonism between free conscience and personal affection disappears, as a difficulty, from the “terms of communion.” Then, in the *Game of Tradition*, Mr Holbeam passes to another question—if the terms of communion were ever so defined, how should we be able to know facts?

These are questions which, more or less, trouble every man new to the world, and receive in practice approximate solutions. The same may be said of the questions in the two following papers; but my friend appears to have thought it worth while—approximate solutions notwithstanding—to state them strongly, and let them do their worst with him. The disappointment of sincere effort, and that miserable “self-love” quibble, are constant bugbears in the way of the young, and it is certainly as well to have done with them, when we can.

In the highest forms of human experience, Truth and Honour may, and sometimes do, become fused; but in the lower forms they are distinct; and my friend has pointed this out in an essay upon the subject. In proportion to the degree in which our personal relations have become living symbols of the truth to us, in other words, of our relation to God—will be the moral rending or dislocation which follows

upon any severance in practice ; but to say that honour must, in case of need, give way to truth, is only another way of saying that ends of personal desire must sometimes be sacrificed for duty. But Mr Holbeach makes this question the stepping-stone to the consideration of larger ones, in the papers immediately subsequent. Can personal will make Right or Truth ? Is any motive to any real duty lost by answering, No ? I do not suppose he pretends to be saying anything new in these papers ; he simply turns the topics round to the reader, as they turned themselves round to him, and hopes the result may not be bad.

In the letter to *One who Feels that a Principle may be pushed too far*, Mr Holbeach drops a hint upon the subject of translation of formal belief,* which he probably thought of extending in some other shape. But I remember hearing him say one day, after we had been listening to a theological discussion, “ Those two men will never agree—how should they ? One thinks of Christ as Matthew paints him—a solid, human figure : the other, if he ever thought of Him in that way, has now ceased to do so,—his Christ is a mythologic image, seen in a poetic haze. There are

* See Appendix.

tens of thousands of people like him, and surely their case is the *reductio ad absurdum* of authoritative doctrine."

It was not likely, in parting with this occasional discussion of the difficulties of life, that Mr Holbeam should omit that great problem in which they are all summed up—the conflict (for it is a conflict) of the male and female types ; and particularly the great mystery—the *terrible* mystery he seems inclined to call it—of the love that women are capable of. Upon that topic, also, I think it probable he has something more to say ; but stands, for the present, in dread of the subject or of his own inaptitude. So, with some passages of criticism, in which he carries his way of looking at things (already made familiar to us by preceding papers,) into the treatment of two leading types of such literature as is most influential in our days, he closes the Studies. They are, perhaps, so slight that even this summary could have been dispensed with ; but it was just as well to show that they are consecutive, and connected.

If in the preceding paragraphs I have been assisted by my friend's own memoranda, I am still more indebted to him in those which follow, summarising the *Controversial Letters*, which I will take in their order, assigning a rapid analysis to each.

LETTER TO MR JOHN STUART MILL.—The moral criterion is Veracity, and not Utility ; though it coincides with Utility. It is necessary, and not experimental ; nor does it depend for its validity upon “consilience” of proof. It has to be worked out in detail by each separate creature, and the purely protective assertion of the individual right of perpetual adjustment is the Sphere of Law, or Force.

LETTER TO MR MAURICE.—When, Justice having been transformed into Reverence, Morals pass into Religion, we arrive at the Sphere of Love, or Self-sacrifice. It is the business of the State to deal with wrong caused by aggressions upon the free activity of others. But there are large tracts of human life in which our free activity, without violating the rights of others, may cause much suffering. This is the sphere of the Church. All the State can ever claim in it is the validity of an exceptional negative.

LETTER TO MR CARLYLE.—A Beneficent Despotism is only another, and a not less dangerous, form of Utilitarianism. No form of Utilitarianism can be admitted except as the instrument of a principle ; an instrument provisionally employed by mutual consent, and only

allowed to be a *divine* expediency because it recognises the principle. A beneficent despotism, like the other form of Utilitarianism, is (except as an expedient, so understood by ruler and ruled) inconsistent with Veracity.

LETTER TO MR MANSEL.—Religious Thought is no more limited, or not otherwise limited, than all other thought. That human knowledge is limited by “the laws of thought” is a barren proposition. The human mind is not limited by “the categories;” it conceives the Absolute *in* the absolute ; and is no more limited by time and space than a mathematical point is. You cannot make a proposition about the Absolute without verbally “limiting” it ; but neither can you about anything else. It is impossible (forsaking direct knowledge of the Absolute) to erect a religion upon the basis of human needs ; *i.e.*, upon “regulative” conceptions. This is the circular sophism of Romanism or Scepticism ; the sophism of Convenience ; and leaves faith without any *ratio* or justification.

LETTER TO DR NEWMAN.—A fabric of authoritative infallible truth cannot be established, in any shape,

Catholic or Protestant, upon an argument of consecutive probabilities. The individual soul may receive "infallible" truth direct from God; but its "certitude" is incommunicable; and, in any attempt to communicate it by force, destroys its own warrant.

The "regulative" claim of the Roman Catholic Church is, on *every* ground, self-destructive.

The argument from probability is misrepresented when it is said that we ever act, in the face of great dangers, upon a slight probability only. We act, in such cases, upon the specific small chance, backed by a general trust, which is incalculably great.

LETTER TO MR G. H. LEWES.—There is only one Science and Method. The movement of what is specifically called science must of necessity be linear, or a process of addition of detail; but it is not superior to the movement of (what is specifically called) "Philosophy;" which must necessarily be circular, because its themes are, by their definition, stationary and objects of affection. All progress in truth consists of the incessant readjustment of conceptions: in this sense, Philosophy has moved as much as Science. The contrary impression is an illusion depending on

certain conditions, which are temporary. There are necessary ideas: cause is not sequence; and the distinction between *noumena* and phenomena is idle.

LETTER TO MR ALEXANDER BAIN.—Whatever imperfections attach to the psychology of Phrenology, the cranioscopy is, with *very* rare exceptions, to be depended on. Thus, the cranioscopy would become *scientific*, if the means of predicting exceptional conditions should ever be conquered. Nor is the psychology so bad as has been, of late years, insisted.

LETTER TO MR ARTHUR HELPS.—A man's manner of dealing with himself, so long as he lays no burden of violated rights upon society, is no business of the legislature's. The case of the Suicide, the Rope-dancer, and the Drunkard, are taken as illustrations.

LETTER TO MR MATTHEW ARNOLD.—“Irrespective criticism, dwelling in the sphere of ideas,” is very greatly needed; but if it once descends to the practical, it becomes mischievous when it neglects a strenuous discussion of the processes by which “ideas” are applied to life and conduct. That Truth may be

“seen” is no reason that it should not be provable ; but the contrary. It is absurd for the intuitionist to rest in the notion that he cannot “hit it” with the logician ;—he *must* hit it,—by an *impliciter*, if not otherwise ; or else he is simply a madman. Some recent legislation, attacked with “ideal” *insouciance* by Mr Arnold as unpremeditated, was really founded upon long and creditable “meditation” upon the part of our legislators.

As I shut up my friend’s desk, glancing hastily at much matter that I cannot now present in any acceptable shape, I am struck with the greatly-deepening sense which he appears to have had of the absolute necessity of *reverence* to a coherently human and affectionately helpful life. However impatient he may be of the *solvitur ambulando* treatment of speculative questions, he seems desirous of making us keenly sensible that such a life will tend to compel a religious attitude of the whole nature ; as, conversely, religion presents such a life as an object of laborious aspiration. A devout attitude, he maintains, is the only one

in which suspense of conviction upon speculative questions can be a real suspense. "If," he continues, "we have always been honest thinkers, the present and the past are vitally affiliated in our lives, and we must be just to both. It is our duty from time to time to whip up the flagging memory of facts, and retouch the fading colours of imagination. It is arduous to remember things; but no life is worth living that does not strive constantly to full-front the truth; and it is impossible usefully to maintain that strife without strong voluntary efforts to recall from time to time whatever one has known, or lived, or believed; because new lights are always breaking upon things; and it is mere pretence to try and check, in the light of new facts, a thing which is not recalled with a *living* memory."

With one more extract from my friend's papers, I will close these pages:—"No *criticism* of the universe, whether it take the name of science or philosophy, can alter anything, or touch the religious question. From the greatness of the great problem we are inevitably tossed back upon the greatness of that which conceives the problem. We may add up our sum from the top or the bottom; there is the small and the large—but where is the synthesis? This incessant criticism cannot, will not, go on. While it continues, let us make

it as pure and as ‘irrespective’ as we can; a truly pious attitude will force so much upon all of us. But the hour that brings the reconciling thought must come; it will not tarry; we or our children may see it; and it will be the hour of a crisis in which, to an ancient battle-cry, the sword will be drawn again. In that hour of storm, some who, analysing in the calm, found they could stop at calling the awful $\eta\thetaos^*$ of Life a Law of Right, will be irresistibly surprised into calling on the Name of the LIVING GOD.”

* Where Mr Holbeach adopts the plural of this word, with the singular article, he obviously does so from a long-continued habit of employing it, in thought, as the equivalent of *mores* = Morals: the *morale*, or Ethic of things.—ED.

APPENDIX.*

VOL. I., PAGE 76. "DISTRIBUTION OF VIRTUES."

IN a recent work, "Essays by a Barrister," full of acute and powerful moral criticism, there are some energetic passages concerning the standards to be assumed as the conditions of ordinary human intercourse. The author maintains that "good society" is quite right in maintaining inviolate its conventional code, in which "average comfort" is the condition; and he illustrates the difficulty of affirming any other standard by starting the question of "*Moral Set-offs.*"

"It never appears to strike the persons who are most glib with the usual sarcasms against conventionality, that tremendous evils would be involved in an attempt to increase, in any considerable degree, the severity of conventional morality considered as a penal code. It would involve nothing less than the dissolution of almost every social relation; for if we did not take the average comfort of society as the standard by which the enforcement of social penalties is to be regulated, no other standard could be found, except that of ideal goodness. It is barely possible to imagine what a society would be like in which any serious attempt was made to enforce such a standard as this. If it were universally understood that disapproval

* Not restricting myself to matter appropriated as "Appendix" in the notes of Mr Holbeach, I have exercised a discretion in adding anything of current interest which struck me as being really illustrative of his meaning.—ED.

was to be felt and expressed in substantial forms,—not on account of the tendency which the actions disapproved of might have to interfere with the comfort of others, but because they implied that the person performing them fell short of that degree of virtue which his neighbours required of him,—the most powerful of all repressive forces would be brought to bear upon human conduct. A system of prohibitions as severe as those of the narrowest religious fanaticism would be brought into constant activity,—an activity the more serious because it would be unostentatious, and, to the generality of men, imperceptible. The moral standard which public opinion would thus enforce, would of necessity be imperfect in two vital respects. In the first place, it would be exclusively negative. It would take account only of specific bad actions. It could never weigh the influence of circumstances upon individuals, nor could it notice those elements of human nature which are not embraced under the categories of moral good and evil. It would place under a social ban all men of impulsive and original characters, in whom good and bad impulses take determinate forms, and it would tend to foster that passionless mediocrity which makes large bodies of people into moral Laodiceans,—neither hot nor cold,—and entitled to little other praise or blame than that of being more or less prudent. In the second place, the standard thus raised would not only be negative, but narrow and trivial. It would represent nothing but the average feelings of the majority; and these average feelings, though good in their way, are despicable if they are regarded as a measure of the moral relations in which men might and ought to stand to each other. We often hear that morality is a simple matter, level to the comprehension of every one; and no doubt there is something that goes by the name of which this is true; but the distance between this something and the ultimate theory of human conduct is infinite. To take the great question hinted at above, what do the conceptions of ordinary men teach us as to what may be called moral set-offs? Was Lord Nelson a better or a worse man than a clerk in a London bank who passed his life in a moral torpor, without sufficient energy or temptation to do anything very right or very wrong? No one has ever settled the question satisfactorily, or even done anything

considerable towards stating its elements ; but if society were to take upon itself the censorship of private character, it would be dealt with in the narrowest and most mischievous way. Social penalties are indispensable for the comparatively humble purpose of maintaining social decency and comfort ; but they would be mischievous in the extreme if they were inflicted on the principle that the common opinions of average men ought to mould the characters of mankind. It is one of the great evils of the day that they have already far too strong an influence in that direction."

The question raised here is whether energetic greatness, with great irregularity, is to be dealt with more or less tolerantly than mere correctness, which is *what* it is, simply because the character will take one mould as easily as another. But upon certain parts of this "Study of a Puritan Colony," the average reader may need the light which will be thrown by a short extract from Robert Hall :—

"St John rests his attachment to Gaius and to the elect lady on the truth which dwelt in them ; he professed no Christian attachment but for the truth's sake ; and he forbade Christians to exercise hospitality, or to show the least indication of friendship, to those who taught any other doctrine than that which he and his fellow-apostles taught."

Here is a manifest prohibition of social intercourse with those who preached "another gospel;" but two questions at least arise upon it to such as expect to find in the New Testament a detailed guide of conduct :—1. Was it a merely temporary prohibition, applying to a time of great stress from persecution and confused gospelling ? 2. Does the prohibition against such as preach a false gospel extend to such as preach no gospel at all ?

Mr Buckle, in his last volume, expressed great indignation with the Covenanters and others for acting in the manner which St John has been understood to command ; but he suppressed, or omitted, the fact that St John had been so understood.

VOL. I., PAGE 104.

As Walter Savage Landor, whatever his faults were, was not unmanly, his testimony to the goodness of Shelley is worth quoting, especially as it is not well known to the general reader :—

“There was something in Byron’s mind not ungraceful nor inelegant, although, from a deficiency of firmness, it wanted dignity. He issued forth against stronger and better men than himself, partly through wantonness and malignity, partly through ignorance of their powers and worth, and partly through impatience at their competition. He could comprehend nothing heroic, nothing disinterested. Shelley, at the gates of Pisa, threw himself between him and the dragoon, whose sword in his indignation was lifted and about to strike. Byron told a common friend, some time afterward, that he could not conceive how any man living should act so. ‘Do you know, he might have been killed ! and there was every appearance that he would be !’ The answer was, ‘Between you and Shelley there is but little similarity, and perhaps but little sympathy : yet what Shelley did then, he would do again, and always. There is not a human creature, not even the most hostile, that he would hesitate to protect from injury at the imminent hazard of life. And yet life, which he would throw forward so unguardedly, is somewhat more with him than with others : it is full of hopes and aspirations, it is teeming with warm feelings, it is rich and overran with its own native simple enjoyments. In him everything that ever gave pleasure, gives it still, with the same freshness, the same exuberance, the same earnestness to communicate and share it.’

“‘By Jove ! I cannot understand it !’ cried Byron. ‘A man to run upon a naked sword for another.’

“Innocent and careless as a boy, Shelley possessed all the delicate feelings of a gentleman, all the discrimination of a scholar, and united, in just degrees, the ardour of the poet with the patience and forbearance of the philosopher. His generosity and charity went far beyond those of any man (I believe) at present in existence. He was never

known to speak evil of an enemy, unless that enemy had done some grievous injustice to another ; and he divided his income of only one thousand pounds with the fallen and afflicted.

“ This is the man against whom such clamours have been raised by the [intolerant and timid,] and by those who live and lap under their tables : this is the man whom, from one false story about his former wife, related by Mackintosh, I had refused to visit at Pisa. I blush in anguish at my prejudice, and ought hardly to feel it as a blessing or a consolation, that I regret him less than I should have done if I had known him personally. As to what remains of him now life is over, he occupies, if not the highest, almost the highest place among our poets of the present age—no humble station—and is among the most elegant, graceful, and harmonious of the prose-writers.”

Probably the “one false story” related by Mackintosh, (and revived within these few years,) is that which is referred to by Shelley in his frantic letters to his wife from Ravenna, August 7, 1821, and Wednesday, (August 16,) also from Ravenna : perhaps the most despairing compositions that ever came from human pen.

VOL. I., PAGE 117. “ THE WELL-KNOWN DIALOGUE OF JULIAN AND MADDALO EXPRESSES THE CONFLICT PERFECTLY.”

It may seem to a great many persons absurd to claim Shelley as a Puritan ; yet, by the affinities of his moral faith, he *was* one ; and Lord Byron as distinctly belonged to the Cavalier side. The faith of a man like Shelley requires a rather long process of translation into other, though corresponding terms, before the ordinary Puritan will recognise it ; but the Puritan *conscience* is there, and the Puritan steadfastness. In quoting a passage of the dialogue, in which it is unnecessary to say Maddalo stands for Byron, I have slightly altered the fourth and thirty-second lines

for a good reason, but without affecting the sense which Shelley would have wished put upon them, if he had known he was going to be quoted in this connection (!) :—

“ ‘ The words you spoke last night might well have cast
 A darkness on my spirit ;—if man be
 The passive thing you say, I should not see
 Much harm in the [old disciplines and] saws,
 (Though I may never own such leaden laws,)
 Which break a teachless nature to the yoke :
 Mine is another faith.’—Thus much I spoke,
 And, noting he replied not, added—‘ See
 This lovely child ; blithe, innocent, and free ;
 She spends a happy time, with little care ;
 While we to such sick thoughts subjected are,
 As came on you last night. It is our will
 Which thus enchains us to permitted ill.
 We might be otherwise ; we might be all
 We dream of, happy, high, majestical.
 Where is the beauty, love, and truth we seek
 But in our minds ? And, if we were not weak,
 Should we be less in deed than in desire ?’—
 ‘ Ay, if we were not weak,—and we aspire,
 How vainly ! to be strong,’ said Maddalo.
 ‘ You talk Utopian ’—

“ ‘ It remains to know,’
 I then rejoined, ‘ and those who try may find
 How strong the chains are which our spirit bind :
 Brittle perchance as straw. We are assured
 Much may be conquered, much may be endured,
 Of what degrades and crushes us. We know
 That we have power over ourselves to do
 And suffer—what, we know not till we try ;
 But something nobler than to live and die.
 So taught the kings of old philosophy,
 Who reigned before the abject world grew blind ;
 And those who suffer with their suffering kind,
 Yet feel this faith, religion.’

“ ‘ My dear friend,’
 Said Maddalo, ‘ my judgment will not bend
 To your opinion, though I think you might
 Make such a system reputation tight,
 As far as words go. I knew one like you,
 Who to this city came some months ago,
 With whom I argued in this sort,—and he
 Is now gone mad—and so he answered me,
 Poor fellow ! But if you would like to go,
 We’ll visit him, and his wild talk will show
 How vain are such aspiring theories.’

“ I hope to prove the induction otherwise,
 And that a want of that true theory still,
 Which seeks a soul of goodness in things ill,
 Or in himself or others, has thus bowed

His being :—there are some by nature proud,
 Who, patient in all else, demand but this—
 To love and be beloved with gentleness ;
 And being scorned, what wonder if they die
 Some living death ? This is not destiny,
 But man's own wilful ill.”

Readers who fancy that all this is simply a vehement assertion of the perfectibility of human nature out of its own resources, must endeavour to understand the place which was occupied in Shelley’s mind by his “Spirit of the Universe,” and must remember some lines in “The Boat on the Serchio :”—

“ All rose to do the task He set to each,
 Who shaped us to His ends, and not our own.”

But this subject cannot be here pursued.

VOL. I., PAGE 198. “PROMISES.”

See Numbers xxx. 3-8. See also Paley, *passim*, under the head “Promises.”

But as Paley is not a received authority on points of honour, it may be better to quote a writer of whom (it is no breach of delicacy to say) are known as chivalric things as of any man living :—

“ The principle which demands uncontrolled freedom of action in all that concerns only the agents themselves, requires that those who have become bound to one another, in things which concern no third party, should be able to release one another from the engagement ; and even without such voluntary release, there are perhaps no contracts or engagements, except those that relate to money or money’s worth, of which one can venture to say that there ought to be no liberty whatever of retraction.”—JOHN STUART MILL.

It is scarcely necessary to add that commercial promises are excepted because they can be made definite.

VOL. I., PAGE 209.

The following paragraphs from the article in question will at once exhibit the correspondence, and illustrate the argument :—

“ In order to understand the matter fully, we must look in the first place at Dr Newman’s method of inquiry, or rather at his canon of proof in religious matters. It consists of what he calls the doctrine of probability. He originally learnt it, he says, from Butler, who teaches that probability is the guide of life. He was confirmed in it by Mr Keble. He gives an outline of it in these words :— ‘ My argument is in outline as follows : that the absolute certitude which we were able to possess, whether as to the truths of natural theology, or as to the fact of a revelation, was the result of an assemblage of concurring and converging probabilities, and that both according to the constitution of the human mind and the will of its maker ; that certitude was a habit of mind, and that certainty was a quality of propositions ; that probabilities which did not reach to logical certainty might create a mental certitude ; and that the certitude thus created might equal in measure and strength the certitude that is created by the strictest scientific demonstration.’ This is true enough if the probabilities are independent. For instance, let the question be whether *Z* was in a given place at a given time. A says he saw him then and there ; B, independently of A, says he saw him going in that direction shortly before the time ; C says he saw him coming from it shortly afterwards ; and D says that he found footmarks at the place soon after the time, which had not been there before, and which corresponded accurately with *Z*’s shoes. Here are four facts, each raising an independent probability, and therefore all uniting to strengthen the conclusion. This is a case of accumulation of probabilities. No doubt, under particular circumstances, the result might be a certitude (to use Dr Newman’s language) as great as that with which we believe in the multiplication table. I am at least as sure that on or about a certain day, at a certain place, I

went through the marriage ceremony with the person with whom I have ever since lived as my wife, as I am that twice two are four. This is because a thousand independent and converging probabilities do in fact convince me of the truth of those assertions. I cannot say more for the multiplication table itself. Where the probabilities are dependent, the case is altogether different. Suppose the question is, whether the eldest child of a newly married couple will inherit the estate of the husband. First, it is more probable than not that there will be children of the marriage. Next, if a child is born, it is probable that it will be a son, for more boys are born than girls. Thirdly, if a son is born, it will probably (let us assume) survive its father. This may look like an accumulation of probabilities, but in reality it is the reverse. The total probability diminishes at each step, and it diminishes so fast, that though each event may be probable in itself, the final result may be altogether improbable. Suppose, for the sake of illustration, that it is an even chance in each case, that is to say, that it is an even chance whether there are children of the marriage, whether the first child born is a boy, and whether the boy survives his father. The chance that the eldest child will not inherit the estate is three to one.

"Dr Newman seems to commit the error of confusing together these different things. He says, 'In 1843-4, I believed in a God on a ground of probability ; I believed in Christianity on a probability ; and I believed in Catholicism on a probability ; and all three were about the same kind of probability, a cumulative, a transcendent probability ; but still a probability.' It is not quite clear whether this means that each proposition taken separately rested on an accumulation of probabilities, or that the three together made up such a probability. The latter appears in this instance to be Dr Newman's meaning from the general scope of this argument ; but surely it hardly requires argument to show that these probabilities are dependent, and not cumulative—that they resemble the second illustration, and not the first. If there is no God, the argument for Christianity is worthless. And it is logically impossible for a man to be more sure that Christianity is true than that there is a God ; that belief, and that



alone, can make the Christian miracles credible. If there was no Christ sent from God, the argument for Roman Catholicism is worthless. To argue against Atheism on the authority of Christ, or to argue in favour of Romanism on the same authority as against a Deist, is a process fit for reasoners of a very different order from those with whom Dr Newman has usually been classed. If it be doubtful whether there is any God at all, (and though Dr Newman will not admit that it is, we shall see immediately that the result of his argument is that it is doubtful in the highest degree,) it must be still more doubtful whether Christ was His messenger ; and if this again is as doubtful as the existence of a God, the natural doubtfulness of the claims of the Roman Catholic Church to be the Church which Christ established must be weakened still further. Dr Newman can have his probabilities whichever way he pleases ; and in either he gets a result fatal to his theories. If the probability of the existence of a God, of the truth of Christianity, and of the truth of Romanism, are dependent on each other, then it must be less probable that Romanism is true than that Theism or the fact of the divine mission of Christ is true. If, on the other hand, the probabilities are independent, what becomes of the argument that every consistent man who is not a Romanist, must be an Atheist ? If, independently of the probability of Romanism, there is a separate probability in favour both of Theism and of Christianity, Theism or Christianity may be believed on the ground of those probabilities, and that without resorting to Rome.

“ You may believe that Z was in the place at the time in question, because you believe A, who says he saw him there, and B, who says he saw him coming away ; and at the same time you may think that C, who says he saw him going, was mistaken, and that D, who compared the foot-marks, is telling a lie. But if the whole depended on A—if, for instance, he alone knew Z, and knew that the shoes were Z’s shoes, then if A were proved to be a liar, the evidence of B and C, who saw an unknown person in such and such places, and the evidence of D, who fitted certain shoes to certain marks, would be worthless.

“ This misapprehension of the nature of probability vitiates the whole of Dr Newman’s theory. Butler is quite

right in teaching that, for some practical purposes, a probability may be much the same as a certainty. A man may be wise in acting even upon a slight probability, as in fact we all do when we insure our houses against fire. He may be morally bound to act upon the supposition that there is a God, although he thinks it doubtful ; but if he is to be an honest man, he is also bound to bear in mind the fact that it is a probability on which he is acting, and to keep himself open to conviction in case further evidence should be discovered."

VOL. I., PAGE 315. THE BRUTALITIES OF LOVE OF POWER
CALLING ITSELF "JUSTICE."

The rod is a very dangerous instrument in the hands of cold-blooded self-esteem ; for the use of it upon the victim is about the most direct of all means of gratifying the love of power. I do not perhaps think flogging always inexpedient ; but it is with intolerable pain that I read of an old man of sixty-three being flogged with the cat for not working. Writing of a parliamentary return of floggings recently inflicted, a very discriminating thinker, who is on the flogging side, goes as far as this :—

"In more than one instance undue severity seems to have been exercised by the magistrates. At Knutsford a child, six years old, received twelve lashes, besides seven days' hard labour, for "stealing one pocket-knife." Again, two of the justices of Ely sentenced another child of twelve years to fourteen days' hard labour and twelve strokes with a birch rod, for "stealing three gingerbread cakes"—a penalty certainly, in appearance, quite out of proportion to the offence, especially when committed by one so young. It may be said that a birch rod is not a very formidable instrument ; but in this instance, at least, it told so heavily on the poor boy, that the surgeon would not permit a ninth stroke."

Judging *a priori*, one always expects to find a clerical justice concerned in anything unusually cruel ; and, accordingly, we learn that a person who writes "reverend" before his name had a share in one of the above cases.

VOL. II., PAGE 32. THE SPHERE OF LAW.

There is an old book, (my edition is dated 1728,) some copies of which have a little woodcut of Franklin at the printing press, (and I believe it was the first book upon which Franklin was set to work when he came over to this country,) called "The Religion of Nature Delineated," by William Wollaston (not Woolston.) It is a very interesting attempt to restate all the old problems of Natural Theology and Ethics, and particularly interesting when read in the light of the memoir of the author, which is prefixed to most of the copies. The footnotes, which are understood to have been added, without book, are extraordinary illustrations of varied learning at the entire command of a tremendous memory. From the Life of this writer I cannot deny myself the pleasure of extracting all that is characteristic, and I feel sure the reader will be entertained by its total freedom from anything like the modern-graphic manner, and its simple quaintness of panegyric :—

"Mr William Wollaston, the author of 'The Religion of Nature Delineated,' was descended from a family which appears to have been ancient and considerable in the county of Stafford. It was, long since, divided into two branches: the former of which continued seated in Staffordshire; but the latter was in process of time transplanted into other counties. The head of the second branch flourished formerly at Oncot in the county of Stafford; but, of late years, at Shenton in the county of Leicester: and was possessed of a very considerable estate in those and other counties. From this second branch was our author descended: and from a younger brother of the same branch sprung Sir John Wollaston, Lord Mayor of London, well known in that city at the time of the late civil war.

"Mr Wollaston was born upon the 26th of March 1659, at Coton-Clanford in Staffordshire. When he was in the tenth year of his age, a Latin school was opened at Shenton in Staffordshire, where his father, a private gentleman, of a small fortune, then resided: and Mr Wollaston was immediately sent to the master of it for such instruction as he was capable to give him; and continued near two

years under his care. Afterwards he was sent to Litchfield school, in which a great confusion soon after happened, and the magistrates of the city turned the master out of the school-house. Many scholars followed the ejected master : and Mr Wollaston amongst the rest. He remained with him till he quitted his school, which was about three years : and then, the schism being ended, he returned into the free school, and continued there about a year. This was all the schooling Mr Wollaston ever had ; and this time was passed, not without uneasiness. For, though he was always a great lover of his book, and desirous of improvement, yet the rudeness of a great school was particularly disagreeable to his nature ; and, what was still worse, he began to be much infested with the headache, which seems to have been constitutional in him.

“ Upon the 18th of June 1674, he was admitted a pensioner in Sidney College in Cambridge ; being then so much upwards of fifteen years of age, as from the 26th of the preceding March. But here he laboured under various disadvantages, to which a person so circumstanced as he then was, could not but be subject. He had no acquaintance in the college, nor even in the university, (to which he was come a country lad from a country school ;) few books or materials to work with ; no assistance or direction from anybody ; nor sufficient confidence to supply that defect by inquiring from others. Add to this, that his state of health was not quite firm : and that his allowance was by no means more than sufficient for bare necessaries ; his then situation being that of a second son of a third son of a second son of a second son, (though, indeed, notwithstanding this series of younger brothers, his grandfather, who stands in the middle of it, had had a considerable estate both real and personal, together with an office of £700 per annum.) However, under all these disadvantages, Mr Wollaston acquired a great degree of reputation in the university ; perhaps too much ; for had it been less, it might have escaped the tax of envy, which probably was the cause of his missing a preferment in the college, which a young man of his character had reason to expect.

“ Upon the 29th of September 1681, he left the university ; being then twenty-two years and a half old. He had commenced master of arts the summer before, and it

seems to have been about this time that he took deacon's orders.

"From Cambridge he went to pay his duty to his father and mother, who now lived at Great Bloxwyche ; having first made a three weeks' visit to the then head of this branch of the family, his cousin Wollaston of Shenton. And he remained at Bloxwyche, with his father and mother (whom he had not seen for many years before) till May or June 1682. About which time, seeing no prospect of preferment, he so far conformed himself to the circumstances of his fortune as to become assistant to the headmaster of Birmingham School ; who readily embraced the opportunity of such a coadjutor, and considered Mr Wollaston as one that prudentially stooped to an employment below what he might have reasonably pretended to. And his cousin of Shenton was far from being displeased at this instance of his relation's humble industry.

"In a short time he got a small lectorship at a chapel about two miles distant. But he did the duty of the whole Sunday ; which, together with the business of a great free school for about four years, began to break his constitution ; and, if continued, had probably overcome it quite, though the stamina of it were naturally very strong.

"During this space he likewise suffered many anxieties, and underwent a deal of trouble and uneasiness, in order to extricate two of his brothers from some inconveniences to which their own imprudences had subjected them. And in the good offices which he did them at this time, he seems to have rather overacted his part ; for he indulged his affection for them more than was consistent with a due regard to his own welfare, as he was then circumstanced.

"When he had been about four years at Birmingham, he was chosen second master of the school ; in which there were three masters, two assistants, and a writing master. It was pretended that he was too young to be head master of so great a school ; but, in reality, the old master was turned out in order to make way for a particular person to succeed him. In this matter, some of the governors themselves owned that Mr Wollaston had wrong done him. He kept this new station about two years. It was worth to him about £70 per annum. Upon this occasion he took priest's orders ; for the words of the charter were interpreted

to require that the masters should be in those orders, and yet must take no ecclesiastical preferment.

“ The late chief master, a valuable and good old man, and for whom Mr Wollaston of Shenton had an esteem, retired after his expulsion to his brother’s house in the neighbourhood of Shenton. He once or twice waited upon Mr Wollaston of Shenton ; and undoubtedly informed him of the character, learning, conversation, and conduct of our author ; which he was very capable of doing, because they had lived together till the time of the old gentleman’s leaving Birmingham.

“ Mr Wollaston of Shenton having now lately lost his only son, and never intending (as appears from his whole conduct) to give his estate to his daughters, pursued his father’s design of continuing it in the male line, and resolved to settle it upon our author’s uncle and father (his own first cousins and his nearest male relations) in the same proportions and manner exactly in which it had been entailed formerly upon them by his father. And accordingly he made such a settlement, subject, however, to a revocation.

“ Mr Wollaston all this while applied himself to his business, and never so much as waited upon his cousin, or employed any one to speak or act anything in his behalf, (though many then blamed him for not doing so.) Only one visit he made him, in the November before his death, lest a total absence should be taken for ingratitude. He went upon a Saturday in the afternoon—gave him a sermon the next day, received his hearty thanks, and the next morning told him that he came only to pay those respects which were due from him, and to thank him for all his favours ; and having done that, desired leave to return to the duties of his station ; but not one syllable did he speak, or even insinuate, in relation to his estate. His cousin dismissed him with great kindness, and by his looks and manner seemed to have a particular regard for him, but discovered nothing of his intention by words.

“ Mr Wollaston of Shenton was used to employ persons privately, to observe our author’s behaviour, (who little suspected any such matter.) And his behaviour was found to be such, that the stricter the observations were upon it, the more they turned to his advantage. In fine, Mr Wol-

laston of Shenton became so thoroughly satisfied of our author's merit, that he revoked the before mentioned settlement, and made a will in his favour.

"In August following, Mr Wollaston of Shenton fell sick, and sent secretly to our author to come over to him as of his own accord without any notice of his illness. He complied with the message, and stayed some days at Shenton. But whilst he was gone home again, under a promise of returning, his cousin died.

"It was the 19th of August 1688, when this gentleman died. His will gave a new and a great turn to Mr Wollaston's affairs, who found himself entitled by it to a very ample estate.

"The circumstances relating to the means whereby Mr Wollaston came to the possession of his estate, and the steps which led to it, have been the more minutely particularised here, because common fame has somehow caught up and forwarded a groundless imagination, that our author was an absolute stranger to the former possessor and his family, and happened to fall into his company by mere accident at an inn. Which is so far from being true, or even bearing any resemblance to truth, that they were very near relations, and this very estate had been twice entailed upon Mr Wollaston's uncle and father.

"Such a sudden and advantageous alteration of affairs would have intoxicated many a one. But the same firmness of mind which supported this gentleman under the pressures of his more adverse fortune enabled him to bear his prosperity with moderation, and his religion and philosophy taught him to maintain a due equanimity under either extreme.

"In November 1688, he came to London, and about a twelvemonth after, upon the 26th of November 1689, he married Mrs Catherine Charlton, daughter of Mr Nicholas Charlton, an eminent citizen of London, a fine woman, with a good fortune and a most excellent character. They lived extremely happy in each other, till her death left him a mournful widower upon the 21st of July 1720. By her he had eleven children, of whom four died in his lifetime ; the rest survived him.

"He may most truly be said to have settled in London, for he very seldom went out of it. He took no delight in

unnecessary journeys, and for above thirty years before his death, had not been absent from his habitation in Charterhouse Square, so much as one whole night.

“ In this his settlement in London, he chose a private and retired life. His carriage was nevertheless free and open. He acted like one that aimed at solid and real content, rather than show and grandeur ; and manifested his dislike of power and dignity, by refusing one of the highest preferments in the Church when it was offered to him. He endeavoured to excel in sincerity and useful sense, more than in formalities and trifles.

“ He had now books and leisure, and it was no small use he made of them. He was perfectly acquainted with the elementary parts of learning, and with the learned languages, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, &c. He thought it necessary to add to these such a degree of philology and criticism as seemed likely to be useful to him ; mathematical sciences, or at least the fundamentals of them, the general philosophy of nature, the history and antiquities of the more known and noted states and kingdoms, and such like erudition. And in order to attain the knowledge of true religion, and the discovery of truth, (the points which he always had particularly in view, and to which he chiefly directed all his studies,) he diligently inquired into the idolatries of the heathens, and made himself master of the sentiments, rites, and learning of the Jews, the history of the first settlement of Christianity, and the opinions and practices introduced into it since. In the meantime he exercised and improved his mind by throwing off prejudices, using himself to clear images, observing the influence and extent of axioms, the nature and force of consequences, and the method of investigating truth. In general, he accustomed himself to think much.

“ By this method, indeed, he was rather qualified for private instruction, than accomplished for public conversation and show. But the latter was not his point. He looked upon that specious sort of knowledge which often gains a man the reputation of a scholar at a very cheap rate, to be a false learning and of no kind of service to him who was in quest of real knowledge.

“ He was of opinion, too, that a man might easily read too much, and he considered the *Helluo Libro-*

rum and the true scholar as two very different characters.

"The love of truth and reason made him love free thinking ; and, as far as the world would bear it, free speaking too. This tended, he thought, to the discovery of error. Though he was not insensible that this might render him less acceptable to many persons—to those who, perhaps, have only just sense enough to perceive their own weakness, or judge of things by the vogue they bear, or the respect they have to their own interest or party, or can neither bear the trouble of an honest inquiry themselves, nor yet that another should know what they do not know ; and, in short, to every prejudiced person whatsoever. But he took all opportunities to assert seriously and inculcate strenuously the being and perfections of God; His providence, both general and particular ; the obligations we are under to adore Him ; the reasonableness of all virtue, the immateriality and immortality of the soul ; future rewards and punishments ; and other high and essential points of natural religion and the Christian revelation. In fine, to reason impartially, and to know where to stop, was the mark he always aimed at.

"And he loved truth, not in speculation only, but also in practice ; for he loved punctual honesty.

"He likewise delighted in method and regularity, and chose to have his labours and refreshments periodical ; and that his family and friends should observe the proper seasons of their revolutions. The reverse of this being the prevailing temper, or, at least, practice of mankind, oftentimes either deprived him of conversation, or rendered it disagreeable to him.

"The general character of his nature was, that it was tender and sensible. This tenderness disposed him to feel and compassionate the miseries of others ; insomuch that he many times suffered more perhaps in another man's case than the man did in his own. This tenderness induced him always to endeavour to satisfy and convince in cases where he might have commanded most despotically and absolutely ; though it is not improbable that in this he was frequently misunderstood as if he meant to chide, when he only intended to explain and convince. To this tenderness may also be ascribed the excessive modesty and diffi-

dence of himself, which made him delight in privacy and retirement, and incapacitated him in a great measure from appearing in public at all like what he really was ; and even occasioned him sometimes to seem inferior to those who exceeded him in nothing but forwardness and conceit. Something of this might indeed be owing to the depression of his spirits in his younger days. From the same causes might arise his strong apprehension of the unreasonable ness and injustice of those who were designedly the beginners of quarrels or abuses, or invaded without provocation another's good name. The same tenderness rendered him in a high manner sensible of the desertion, unkindness, or indifference of friends.

" He never indulged his passions to the hurt of any one. If in any respect he showed that he was not so complete a stoic as to have eradicated his passions, or so perfect a philosopher as never to be surprised by them, it was in the escape of a hasty word or expression now and then, when he was put off his guard by hurries, indispositions, or such like occasions. Yet he was not always angry, when the urgency of business, the straitness of time, the importunity of impertinent people, or the like, caused him to talk louder or quicker than ordinary ; nor often, (if at all,) without sufficient reason ; nor ever so angry with any one else as he would be with himself for having been so. In short, if every one would restrain their anger within the same bounds as he did, there might be a hasty word or expression dropped sometimes upon provocation or indisposition ; but there would never be resentment, wrath, or quarrel more in the world.

" He was most remarkably cheerful and lively in private conversation, and by his inclination ready, as well as by his treasures of learning abundantly qualified, to be serviceable to all sorts of persons. This rendered his company agreeable, and himself worthy to be courted by the learned and virtuous. But a general acquaintance was what he never cultivated, and it grew more and more his aversion ; so that he passed his days mostly at home with a few friends, with whom he could enjoy an agreeable relaxation of mind, and receive all the advantages of a sincere and open friendship. This excessive retirement was, however, attended with some inconveniences. His intimates were dropping off, and their

places remained unsupplied ; his own infirmities were increasing ; the frequent remission of study growing more and more necessary ; and his solitudes at the same time becoming less and less pleasant and agreeable.

" What decays soever there might be in his bodily strength, he nevertheless retained to the last the clearness and perspicuity of his thoughts. But perceiving his designs frustrated by the daily attacks of nature, and that it would be impossible to finish and complete them in the manner he wished, it seems as if he had intended to destroy with his own hand the greatest part of his works ; and that those few manuscripts which were found after his death were indebted to the treachery of his memory for their preservation, for he had, within the last two or three years of his life, actually burnt several treatises, in the composition whereof he had bestowed no small quantity of time and pains. The following, indeed, happened to be spared ; but, from the place in which they were deposited, and from some other circumstances, it is probable that they owed their escape to mere forgetfulness. They were in number thirteen, (besides about fourscore Sermons,) viz. : 1. A Hebrew Grammar. 2. Tyrocinia Arabica and Syriaca. 3. Specimen Vocabularii Biblico-Hebraici, literis nostratibus quantum fert Linguarum Dissonantia descripti. 4. Formulæ quædam Gemarinæ. 5. De variis generibus pedum, metrorum, carminum, &c., apud Judæos, Græcos et Latinos. 6. De Vocum Tonis Monitio ad Tyrone. 7. Rudimenta ad Matthesin et Philosophiam spectantia. 8. Miscellanea Philologica. 9. Opinions of the Ancient Philosophers. 10. *Iwōāīza* : sive Religionis et Literaturæ Judaicæ Synopsis. 11. A Collection of some Antiquities and Particulars in the History of Mankind, tending to show that Men have not been here upon this Earth from Eternity, &c. 12. Some Passages relating to the History of Christ, collected out of the Primitive Fathers. 13. A Treatise relating to the Jews, of their Antiquities, Language, &c. And what renders it the more probable, or indeed almost beyond doubt, that he would have destroyed these likewise if he had remembered them, is, that several of those which remain undestroyed are only rudiments or rougher sketches of what he afterwards reconsidered and carried on much farther ; and which, even after such revisal, he nevertheless committed to the

flames, as being still, in his opinion, short of that perfection to which he desired and had intended to bring them.

"It must be owned, indeed, that he had formerly published a Paraphrase on part of the Book of Ecclesiastes, which he had not corrected. But for that very reason he was afterwards earnestly desirous to suppress it. And he likewise composed and printed a little Latin Grammar; but this was only for the use of his family. The former was printed in the year 1690; the latter in 1703.

"Not long before his death, he published the ensuing treatise, entitled, 'The Religion of Nature Delineated'; in which the picture of his life is most fully drawn. There you may behold him in his real character,—in the humble submission and resignation of himself to the unerring will of the Divine Being,—in his true conjugal and paternal affection to his family,—in his kind regard and benevolence towards his fellow-creatures, according to their respective stations in life; for he himself steadily practised those duties and obligations which he so earnestly recommended to others. The public honours paid to his memory, and the great demand for this book, (of which more than ten thousand were sold in a very few years,) are sufficient testimonies of its value. He had, in the year 1722, printed off a few copies of it for private use; and as soon as he had done so, he began to turn his thoughts to the third question, as appears by a manuscript, entitled, 'Heads and Materials for an Answer to Question 3, set down rudely and anyhow, in order to be considered, &c., after they are got into some Order. July 4, 1723.' Underneath which he has added, 'They are written at length, (not in my short-hand,) that so if this Answer should never be finished, they may, however, not be totally lost.' However, in this design he had opportunity to make but a very small progress; for it was just about this time that, at the instance and persuasion of his friends, he set about revising and publishing the following work, wherein he answered the two first of the proposed Questions,—resolving, as soon as that should be done, to return to and finish his Answer to the Third Question.

"But in that he was disappointed; for immediately after he had completed the revisal and publication of the following treatise, an accident of breaking his arm increased his

distempers and accelerated his death, which happened upon the 29th of October 1724, and has absolutely put an end to the expectation of seeing any more of his works in print, for it would be equally injurious to the author and disrespectful to the public, if his family should expose his more imperfect sketches in print after his death, when he himself had destroyed several more finished pieces because he judged them not sufficiently accurate.

“ His body was carried down to Great Finborough, in Suffolk, one of his estates, and the principal residence of his now eldest son and successor in his estate, who represents the neighbouring borough of Ipswich in Parliament.

“ From all that has been said concerning Mr Wollaston, it appears that, notwithstanding his declining to accept of any public employment, yet his studies were designed to be of public use; and his solitude was far from being employed in vain and trifling amusements terminating in himself alone.

“ His latest moments were calm and easy, such as might be expected to close a life spent like his; and he left the world, as he sojourned in it, quietly and resignedly. Both the manner of his life, and that of his death, were well worthy of imitation.

“ It is scarce worth while to take any notice of an idle or malicious reflection which has been cast, by some overzealous persons, upon this gentleman’s memory, as if he had put a slight upon Christianity by laying so much stress upon the obligations of truth, reason, and virtue; or as if he could not have believed aright, because he did not think it necessary to digress from his subject in order to insert his creed. Surely a suspicion thus founded can deserve no regard. However, it may not be amiss to observe that it has probably been increased by a vulgar mistake that Mr Wollaston, the author of the ‘Religion of Nature Delinated,’ was the same person with Mr Woolston who wrote several pieces which grossly attacked the literal truth of the miracles of Jesus Christ. And this mistake, which arose originally from the similitude of names, might happen to be further confirmed by Mr Woolston’s entitling himself, ‘late Fellow of Sidney College in Cambridge;’ at which college Mr Wollaston himself and four of his sons were educated.”

The reader loses something here by the almost necessary modifications of the droll old spelling and manner of printing. "Question 3," it may be observed, related to the claims of Christianity, as a positive religion.

In a "History of Philosophy," translated from the French, edited by a Dr Henry of New York, and republished in Scotland in 1849, (a very good little manual for readers who can take care,) is the following account of Wollaston's system :—

"William Wollaston was born in 1659 ; educated at Cambridge ; was a teacher in Birmingham school until 1688, when, an ample fortune falling to him, he settled in London, and passed his life in studious retirement. He died in 1724. Of his writings, the best known is his 'Religion of Nature Delineated,' in which his moral system is stated.

"According to Wollaston, good is truth ; and the fundamental law of action is to conform our conduct to truth.

"Every action which denies a true proposition is bad. A true proposition may be denied by omission as well as by commission.

"The nature of moral evil being thus determined, and good being the opposite of evil, the nature of good is likewise determined, and, consequently, the nature of actions, whether good, bad, or indifferent. A good action is one whose omission or whose opposite would be bad, that is, contradictory to the truth.

"As truth and falsehood are in their nature immutable, so likewise are moral good and evil.

"Such is the system of Wollaston, who thus seeks to define the idea of good. It is obvious to remark upon it : 1. That it mistakes one of the aspects or qualities of moral good for its essence : every good action does indeed contain the practical expression of a true proposition ; but every true proposition, when expressed in action, does not involve the quality of moral good. 2. It confounds good and evil by its too comprehensive definition, for there is no bad action which does not contain some true propositions. 3. Many actions may imply the denial of true propositions, and therefore be absurd, while in a moral view

indifferent. 4. This system is not in accordance with facts of consciousness ; when we abstain from doing a wrong act, our motive is not the fear of contradicting a true proposition."

This is a very striking example of the off-hand manner in which thinking people sometimes dispose of each other. The criticism is founded upon an utter misunderstanding of what Wollaston meant (and said,) and all that is necessary, in reply, is to place against it Wollaston's own words, which I collate from different parts of his book :—

" No *act* (whether word or deed) of any being, to whom moral good and evil are imputable, that interferes with any true proposition, or denies anything to be as it is, can be right. For,

" 1. If that proposition, which is false, be wrong, that act which *implies* such a proposition, or is founded in it, cannot be right, because it is the very proposition itself in practice.

" 2. Those propositions, which are true, and express things as they are, express the *relation* between the subject and the attribute as it is ; that is, this is either affirmed or denied of that according to the nature of *that relation*. And further, this relation (or, if you will, the nature of this relation) is determined and fixed by the natures of the things themselves. Therefore nothing can interfere with any proposition that is true ; but it must likewise interfere with nature, (the nature of the relation, and the natures of the things themselves too,) and consequently be *unnatural*, or *wrong in nature*. So very much are those gentlemen mistaken, who, by *following nature*, mean only complying with their bodily inclinations, though in opposition to truth, or at least without any regard to it. Truth is but a conformity to nature ; and to follow nature cannot be to combat truth."

" Every intelligent, active, and free being should so behave himself, as by no act to contradict truth ; or, that he should treat everything as being what it is.

" *Objections*, I am sensible, may be made to almost anything ; but, I believe, none to what has been here advanced, but such as may be answered. For to consider a thing as

being *something else* than what it is, or (which is the same) not to consider it as being what it is, is an absurdity indefensible. However, for a *specimen*, I will set down a few. Let us suppose some gentleman, who has not sufficiently considered these matters, amidst his freedoms, and in the gaiety of humour, to talk after some such manner as this : ‘ If everything must be treated as being what it is, what rare work will follow ? For, 1. To treat my *enemy* as such is to kill him, or *revenge* myself soundly upon him. 2. To use a *creditor*, who is a spendthrift, or one that knows not the use of money, or has no occasion for it, as *such*, is not to pay him. Nay, further, 3. If I *want money*, don’t I act according to truth, if I take it from somebody else to supply my own wants ? And more, do not I act contrary to *truth*, if I do *not* ? 4. If one, who plainly appears to have a *design* of killing another, or doing him some great mischief, if he can find him, should ask me where he is, and I know where he is ; may not I, to save life, say I do not know, though that be false ? 5. At this rate, I may not, in a *frolic*, break a glass or burn a book, because, forsooth, to use these things as being what they are, is to drink out of the one—not to break it ; and to read the other, not burn it. *Lastly*, how shall a man *know* what is true ? and if he can find out truth, may he not want the *power* of acting agreeably to it ? ’

“ To the *first* objection it is easy to reply from what has been already said. For if the objector’s enemy, whom we call E, was *nothing more* than his enemy, there might be some force in the objection ; but since he may be considered as something else beside that, he must be used according to what he is in other respects, as well as in that from which he is denominated the objector’s (or O’s) enemy. For E, in the first place, is a *man* ; and, as such, may claim the benefit of common humanity, whatever that is ; and if O denies it to him, he wounds truth in a very sensible part. And then if O and E are *fellow-citizens*, living under the same government, and subject to laws, which are so many common covenants, limiting the behaviour of one man to another, and by which E is exempt from all private violence in his body, estate, &c., O cannot treat E as being what he is, unless he treats him also as one who, by common consent, is under such a protection. If he does other-

wise, he denies the existence of the foresaid laws and public compacts, contrary to truth. And beside, O should act with respect to *himself* as being what he is,—a man himself, in such or such circumstances, and one who has given up all right to *private revenge*, (for that is the thing meant here.) If truth, therefore, be observed, the result will be this : O must treat E as *something compounded* of a man, a fellow-citizen, and an enemy—all three ; *that is*, he must only prosecute him in such a way as is agreeable to the statutes and methods, which the society have obliged themselves to observe. And even as to *legal prosecutions* there may be many things still to be considered. For E may show himself an enemy to O in things that fall under the cognisance of law, which yet may be of moment and importance to him, or not. If they are such things as really affect the *safety* or *happiness* of O or his family, then he will find himself obliged, in duty and submission to truth, to take refuge in the laws; and to punish E, or obtain satisfaction, and at least security for the future, by the means there prescribed. Because if he does not, he denies the *nature* and *sense* of happiness to be what they are,—the obligations, which, perhaps, we shall show hereafter he is under to his *family*, to be what they are,—a *dangerous* and *wicked* enemy to be dangerous and wicked,—the *end* of laws, and society itself, to be the safety and good of its members, by preventing injuries, punishing offenders, &c., which it will appear to be when that matter comes before us. But if the enmity of E rises not beyond *trifling* or *more tolerable* instances, then O might act against truth if he should be at more charge or hazard in prosecuting E than he can afford, or the thing lost or in danger is worth,—should treat one that is an enemy in little things, or a *little* enemy as a *great* one,—or should deny to make some allowances, and *forgive* such peccadillos as the common frailty of human nature makes it necessary for us mutually to forgive, if we will live together. *Lastly*, in cases of which the laws of the place take *no notice*, truth and nature would be sufficiently observed if O should keep a vigilant eye upon the steps of his adversary, and take the most *prudent* measures that are compatible with the character of a private person, either to assuage the malice of E, or prevent the effects of it ; or, perhaps, if he should only

not use him as a friend. For this if he should do, notwithstanding the rants of some men, he would cancel the natural differences of things, and confound truth with untruth.

“The debtor, in the *second* objection, if he acts as he says there, does, in the first place, make himself the *judge* of his creditor, which is what he is not; for he lays him under a heavy sentence, an incapacity in effect of having any estate, or any more estate. In the *next* place, he arrogates to himself more than can be true,—that he perfectly *knows*, not only what his creditor and his circumstances *are*, but also what they ever *will* be hereafter. He that is now weak, or extravagant, or very rich, may, for ought he knows, become otherwise. *And*, which is to be considered above all, he directly denies the money, which is the creditor’s, to be the creditor’s. For it is *supposed* to be owing or due to him, (otherwise he is no creditor;) and if it be due to him, he has a right to it; and if he has a right to it, *of right* it is *his*, (or it is *his*.) But the debtor, by detaining it, uses it as if it was his own, and therefore *not* the other’s, —contrary to truth. To pay a man what is *due* to him doth not deny that he who pays may think him extravagant, &c., or any other truth; that act has no such signification. It only signifies, that he who pays *thinks* it due to the other, or that it is *his*; and *this* it naturally doth signify. For he might pay the creditor without having any other thought relating to him, but would not *without this*.

“*Answer to Objection the Third.*—Acting according to truth, as that phrase is used in the objection, is not the thing required by my rule, but so to act that *no truth* may be *denied* by any act. Not taking from another man his money by violence is a forbearance, which does not signify that I do not want money, or which denies any truth. But taking it *denies* that to be *his* which (by the supposition) *is his*. The former is only, as it were, silence, which denies nothing; the latter a direct and loud assertion of a falsity; the former what can contradict no truth, because the latter does. If a man wants money through his own extravagance and vice, there can be no *pretence* for making another man to pay for his wickedness or folly. We will suppose, therefore, the man who wants money to want it for *neces-*

saries, and to have incurred this want through some *misfortune* which he could not prevent. In this case, which is put as strong as can be for the objector, there are ways of expressing this want, or acting according to it, without trespassing upon truth. The man may, by honest *labour* and industry, seek to supply his wants; or he may apply as a *supplicant*—not as an enemy or robber—to such as can afford to relieve him; or, if his want is very pressing, to the first persons he meets whom truth will oblige to assist him according to their abilities; or he may do *anything but* violate truth, which is a privilege of a vast scope, and leaves him many resources. And such a behaviour as *this* is not only agreeable to his case, and expressive of it in a way that is natural; but he would deny it to be what it is if he did not act thus. If there is no way in the world by which he may help himself without the violation of truth, (which can scarce be supposed,)—if there is no other way, he must even take it as his fate. Truth will be truth, and must retain its character and force, let his case be what it will. Many things might be added. The man from whom this money is to be taken will be proved, Sect. VI.) to have a right to *defend* himself and his, and not suffer it to be taken from him; perhaps he may stand as much in need of it as the other, &c.

“*Answer to Objection the Fourth.*—It is certain, in the *first* place, that nothing may willingly be done which in any manner promotes *murder*; whoever is accessory to that, offends against *many* truths of *great* weight. 2. You are not obliged to answer the *furioso’s* question. Silence here would contradict no truth. 3. No one can tell, in strict speaking, where another is if he is not within his view; therefore you may *truly* deny that you know where the man is. *Lastly*, if by not discovering him you should endanger your life, (and this is the hardest circumstance that *can* be taken into the objection,) the case then would be the same as if the inquirer should say, ‘If you do not murder such a one, I will murder you;’ and then be sure you must not commit murder, but must defend yourself against this as against other dangers, against banditti, &c., *as well as you can*. Though merely to deny truth by *words*, (I mean when they are not productive of facts to follow, as in judicial transactions, bearing witness or passing sentence,) is

not equal to a denial by *facts*,—though an *abuse* of language is allowable in this case, if ever in any,—though all sins against truth are not equal, and certainly a little trespassing upon it in the present case for the good of all parties, as *little* a one as any,—and though one might look on a man in such a fit of rage as mad, and therefore talk to him, not as a *man*, but a *madman*,—yet truth is *sacred*; and there are other ways of coming off with innocence by giving timely notice to the man in danger, calling in assistance, or taking the advantage of some seasonable incident.

“The fifth *objection* seems to respect *inanimate* things, which, if we must treat according to what they are, it is insinuated we shall become obnoxious to many *trifling* obligations, such as are there mentioned. To this I *answer* thus:—If the *glass* be nothing else but a useful drinking-glass, and these words fully express what it is, to treat it accordingly is indeed to drink out of it when there is occasion, and it is truly useful, and to *break* it designedly is to do what is wrong; for that is to handle it as if it neither was useful to the objector himself, nor could be so to any one else,—contrary to the description of it. But if there be any *reason* for breaking the glass, then something is wanting to declare fully what it is,—as if the glass be poisoned, for then it becomes a *poisoned drinking-glass*, and to break or destroy it is to use it according to this *true* description of it. Or if, by breaking it, anything is to be obtained which more than countervails the loss of it, it becomes a *glass with that circumstance*; and then for the objector to break it, if it be his own, is to use it according to what it is. And if it should become by some circumstance *useless* only, though there should be no reason for breaking it, yet if there be none against it, the thing will be indifferent and matter of liberty. This answer, *mutatis mutandis*, may be adapted to other things of this kind—*books* or anything else. As the usefulness or excellency of some books renders them worthy of immortality, and of all our care to secure them to posterity, so some may be used more like what they are by tearing or burning them, than by preserving or reading them,—the number of which, *large* enough already, I wish you may not think to be increased by this which I here send you.

“Here *two* things ought to be regarded:—1. That though

to act against truth in any case is wrong, yet, the degrees of guilt varying with the importance of things, in some cases the importance one way or the other, may be so little as to render the crime *evanescent* or *almost* nothing ; and, 2. that *inanimate* beings cannot be considered as capable of wrong treatment, if the respect they bear to living beings is separated from them. The drinking-glass before mentioned could not be considered as such, or be what it *now* is, if there was no drinking animal to own and use it. Nothing can be of any importance to that thing itself, which is void of all life and perception. So that when we compute what such things are, we must take them as being what they are *in reference* to things that have life.

“The last and most material *objection*, or *question* rather, shall be *answered* by and by. In the meantime I shall only say, that if in any particular case truth is inaccessible, and after due inquiry it doth not appear *what*, or *how* things are, then this will be true, *that the case* or thing under consideration is *doubtful*; and to act agreeably unto this truth is to be not opinionative, nor obstinate, but modest, cautious, docile, and to endeavour to be *on the safer side*. Such behaviour shows the case to be as it is. And as to the want of *power* to act agreeably to truth, that cannot be known till trials are made : and if any one doth try, and do his endeavour, he may take to himself the satisfaction, which he will find in Sec. IV.”

“The *αριθμον* of right reason and truth, or that which is to be regarded in judging of right and truth, is *private*: that is, every one must judge for himself. For since all reasoning is founded originally in the knowledge of one’s own private ideas, by virtue of which he becomes conscious of some first truths, that are undeniably; by which he governs his steps in his pursuits after more truths, &c., the *criterion*, or that by which he tries his own reasonings, and knows them to be right, must be the *internal* evidence he has already of certain truths, and the agreeableness of his inferences to them. One man can no more discern the objects of his own understanding, and their relations, by the faculties of another, than he can see with another man’s eyes, or one ship can be guided by the helm of another. They must be his *own* faculties and conscience, that must determine him.”

Comparing these extracts with the criticism, the reader will see that the latter is inapplicable. It would have been plausible if the critic had said Wollaston's first principle was (without the last extracted passage) a barren truism ; but it was inexcusable to suppose that any man of such obvious ability *could* lay himself open to strictures so obvious as those which the critic thinks it worth his while to make.

VOL. II., PAGE 82. THE SPHERE OF LOVE.

In 1863 was published a remarkable sermon, with the following title :—

“ Is it the Duty of Churchmen to Protest against the Opening of Theatres in Holy Week ? A Sermon preached in the Church of All Saints', Notting Hill, after Even-song, on Sunday, August 12, 1863. By John Compton, B.A., Chaplain of the Workhouse, St James's, Westminster. ‘τι τὸ κέρδος, ἐὰν ἔγημοι κατοχθωμάτων παρέλθωμεν τὴν οὐσίαν.’—S. Chrysost., Hom. xvi. ad Pop. Antioch. Published by Request. London : G. J. Palmer.”

This was probably one of the boldest sermons ever preached, as its author is certainly a very thoughtful and accomplished man. Passages of wide application might easily be selected from it in great plenty,* but I must confine myself to such as relate to the question of disunion of function between Church and State. Mr Compton strenuously advocates the duty of “ the Church ” to restore the old “ discipline ;” but then he proceeds :—

“ Still it is said, ‘ Hear the Church ! ’ Well, let the Church be heard. But by whom ? Is it by them that are

* For example :—

“ Truth has nothing to fear from controversy—our sturdy ancestors did not fear it. History tells of times when from the same pulpit, Calvinism used to be preached in the morning, and Arminianism in the afternoon—and perhaps Truth had a better chance of being developed thereby, than if either of the parties had had it all its own way.”

without? Nay, by them that are *within*, for ‘what has she to do to judge them that are without?’ Hear, then, the Church! But if you find it necessary to invoke the interference of the secular power to enforce an observance, what is this but to acknowledge that the National Church really has no authority in the matter?

“The imposition of a rule which fetters individual action, is an unwarrantable restraint on Christian liberty, and tends to destroy personal responsibility.

“It is true this liberty may be abused, and in the multitude of instances perhaps is abused; but one evil must not be corrected by another of an opposite sort. The mischiefs of excessive licence are not worse than those of what Archbishop Whately denounces under the name of ‘the over-governing system.’ It is one of the many paradoxes of the human character, that notwithstanding all the independence of which we make our boast, there is a lurking disposition in the mind of most of us to put itself under ‘direction.’

“This tendency is sufficiently strong without calling in the aid of an officious legislation. In its results, moreover, it is most mischievous; it fosters self-conceit, it encourages spiritual sloth, it eliminates the moral sense, and converts free men into mere machines. You commit an outrage against morality, when you bring a man into bondage even for the purpose of protecting him against his own excesses.

“But, ‘public opinion!’ is no consideration due to that? Public opinion, when well directed, may be a very good thing, but it may also be a very bad thing. Public opinion ‘thrust’ out Moses—public opinion ostracised Aristides—public opinion crucified Christ.”

The footnotes to this sermon are by no means the least curious part of it. With respect to the over-governing systems, we have the following:—

“He was always most decidedly opposed to that *over-governing* system which would enjoin by law everything that men ought to do, and enact legal prohibitions of everything that is unadvisable.” . . . “Men ought to be allowed to judge and to act, as they themselves think fit, except where it can be shown (as in many cases it can be) that some serious public evil would result, or that some

public benefit would be obtained by a restriction, sufficient to overbalance the evil of that restriction itself. The burden of proof clearly lies on those who advocate the introduction or continuance of any limitation of liberty."—*Memoir of Bishop Copleston*, Introduction, pp. 38, 399. See also Robertson's Sermons, 3d series, p. 179. Vinet, Theol. Past., p. 113, line 13, and Appendix, pp. 304, 305. Rev. F. D. Maurice, Unity of the New Testament, p. 425. Growth in Holiness, by F. W. Faber, cap. xviii., pp. 342-348.

I do not, in quoting this admirable sermon, wish it to be supposed that there are not large differences of opinion, visible on the surface, between Mr Compton and myself—there are. For example, so long as "the Church" retains her connexion with the State, I strenuously oppose the idea of ecclesiastical discipline. Dissever the connexion, and I have nothing to say to the Church, but what I have ventured to say in my letter to Mr Maurice,—Go on to acquire as much power as the human conscience will let you! I have already said that I think some things which are now taken charge of by the State, belong really to the sphere of the Church, and that the hope of the world lies in her reconquest of these disrupted provinces of human life. But I need not say I contemplate, in this, not any one particular "church," but the devout conscience of the race embodying itself as it may, under whatever form it finds true.

If Mr Holbeach reads newspapers just now, he is, I am sure, pleased with the passage which I am now going to extract from the *Spectator*, of Feb. 25, 1865. It is a review :—

"*Sermons on Moral Subjects.* By His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman. The greater number of these discourses might pass muster in a village church very well, except, of course, one or two like that on confession. *But it is part of the Romish tactics to drop their ecclesiastical system out of sight where the Church is really missionary.* Perhaps also it is there really less mischievous. It may be questioned

whether the power conceded to the clergy by the Christian congregations was not really salutary up to the date of the conversion of Constantine, and so much as they possessed then might still be salutary *in the case of a voluntary church*—*where the clergy could not invoke the aid of the state to enforce their decrees in invitatis.* Of course the Roman Church claims now something infinitely more than this, and where she has the civil government at her disposal makes life intolerable to heretics. But you hear nothing of this in English Catholic pulpits, nor in this volume of sermons.”—ED.

VOL. II., PAGE 85. LETTER TO MR CARLYLE.

This “Contribution to Human Welfare” was a short article in *Macmillan’s Magazine*, professing to put the “American ‘Iliad’ in a nutshell.” The North, said Mr Carlyle, prefers to hire its servants for a limited time; the South for life,—that is all the difference!

VOL. II., PAGE 111. LETTER TO MR MANSEL.

The following is Butler’s own account of his “General Scheme:”—

“Now, the Divine government of the world, implied in the notion of religion in general, and of Christianity, contains in it,—That mankind is appointed to live in a future state; that there every one shall be rewarded or punished; rewarded or punished respectively for all that behaviour here which we comprehend under the words virtuous or vicious, morally good or evil; that our present life is a probation, a state of trial and of discipline for that future one, notwithstanding the objections which men may fancy they have, from notions of necessity, against there being any such moral plan as this at all; and whatever objections

may appear to lie against the wisdom and goodness of it, as it stands so imperfectly made known to us at present,—that this world being in a state of apostasy and wickedness, and consequently of ruin, and the sense both of their condition and duty being greatly corrupted amongst men, this gave occasion for an additional dispensation of Providence, of the utmost importance, proved by miracles, but containing in it many things appearing to us strange, and not to have been expected ; a dispensation of Providence, which is a scheme or system of things, carried on by the mediation of a divine person, the Messiah, in order to the recovery of the world ; yet not revealed to all men, nor proved with the strongest possible evidence to all those to whom it is revealed ; but only to such a part of mankind, and with such particular evidence, as the wisdom of God thought fit. The design, then, of the following Treatise will be to show that the several parts principally objected against in this moral and Christian dispensation, including its scheme, its publication, and the proof which God has afforded us of its truth ; that the particular parts principally objected against in this whole dispensation, are analogous to what is experienced in the constitution and course of Nature or Providence ; that the chief objections themselves, which are alleged against the former, are no other than what may be alleged with like justness against the latter, where they are found in fact to be inconclusive ; and that this argument, from analogy, is in generable unanswerable, and undoubtedly of weight on the side of religion, notwithstanding the objections which may seem to lie against it, and the real ground which there may be for difference of opinion, as to the particular degree of weight which is to be laid upon it. This is a general account of what may be looked for in the following treatise.”

The passage in which Butler repudiates the idea of being supposed to imply that no man can be saved who has not heard of Christianity, is as follows, (chap v., part ii.) :—

“ It cannot, I suppose, be imagined, *even by the most cursory reader*, that it is, *in any sort, affirmed or implied*, in anything said in this chapter, that none can have the

benefit of the general redemption, but such as have the advantage of being made acquainted with it in the present life."

And, closely adjacent is that in which the Bishop denies that the Bible contains any theory of the atonement :—

"How, and in what particular way, it [the sacrifice of Christ] had this efficacy, there are not wanting persons who have endeavoured to explain; but I cannot find that the Scripture has explained it. . . . And if the Scripture has, as surely it has, left this matter of the satisfaction of Christ mysterious, left somewhat in it unrevealed, all conjectures about it must be, if not evidently absurd, yet at least uncertain. Nor has any one reason to complain for want of farther information, unless he can show his claim to it."

It may well be said that this kind of writing is wanting in the "*sal evangelicum*." Accordingly, in an edition, elaborately edited by "Daniel Wilson, D.D., Lord Bishop of Calcutta," we find, mingled with panegyric, criticism like the following :—

"That we do not deprecate the talents and labours of Bishop Butler, must have been obvious to every reader of these pages. *We have even expressed the hope, the rational hope, springing from a judgment of charity, that in his own mind he followed the true doctrine, and that he was far from intending to produce those consequences to which his language may lead.* . . . His work is cold. He seems rather like a man forced to be a Christian, than one rejoicing in its blessings. . . . It cannot, and need not be concealed, that the occasional hints which fall from him, on the particular grace of the Christian religion, and its operation on the heart, are far from being explicit. His references to the precise nature of our justification before God—to the extent of the fall and ruin of man by sin—. . . do not correspond with the largeness of the case. They are partial and defective.

"With a defective view of the fruits of our Lord's propitiation, is allied a correspondent defect as to the nature

and importance of faith, by which the benefits of that propitiation are received and applied. We must unequivocally declare our apprehension, that the language used by our author, in speaking of the Almighty finally rendering to every one according to his works, and establishing the entire rights of distributive justice, is open to objection. Perhaps, if taken alone, it might admit of a favourable interpretation; but, when joined with the overstatements already noticed, on the powers of man and the remains of natural religion, it becomes decidedly dangerous. The great doctrine of our justification before God, ‘not by our own works and deservings, but only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ,’ is too fundamental, and too important, to be undermined, even incidentally. We refer to such expressions as the following:—‘The advantages of Christianity will be bestowed upon every one, in proportion to the degrees of his virtue;’—‘Divine goodness may be a disposition to make the good, the faithful, the honest man happy;’—‘We have scope and opportunities here, for that good and bad behaviour which God will reward and punish hereafter;’—‘Religion teaches us, that we are placed here, to qualify us, by the practice of virtue, for another state which is to follow it;’—‘Our repentance is accepted to eternal life.’ These and similar statements occur throughout the work. Bishop Butler’s language is not scriptural. *He substitutes weaker and more ambiguous expressions. He lowers everything.* The general idea of the scheme of the gospel as a dispensation of grace, which would be gathered from the whole of his representations and suggestions, would be erroneous. He calls Christianity ‘a moral system:’ he speaks of it as teaching us chiefly ‘new duties, and new relations in which we stand;’ he describes it as ‘an additional order of Providence.’ These expressions are cold and inadequate. We cannot but think, that he sometimes attributes too much to the unaided nature of man, allows too much to his moral sense and feeling, dwells too largely on his tendencies to virtue and goodness, and speaks too ambiguously on the ground of his justification before God. Such expressions as the following, considering the connexion in which they stand, are open to abuse: ‘Moral nature given us by God,’—‘Falling in with our natural apprehension and sense of things,’—‘There is no-

thing in the human mind contradictory to virtue,—‘The moral law is interwoven in our nature,’—‘Men may curb their passions, for temporal motives, in as great a degree as piety commonly requires,’—‘Natural religion is the foundation and principal part of Christianity,’—‘Men’s happiness and virtue are left to themselves, are put in their own power,’—‘Religion requires nothing which men are not well able to perform,’—‘The relation in which we stand to God the Father, is made known to us by reason.’ We cannot conceal our conviction, that Butler’s view of human depravity does not fully meet the truth of the case, as delineated in the inspired writings, and confirmed by uniform experience. He speaks, we allow, occasionally of men ‘having corrupted their natures,’ having lost their ‘original rectitude,’ and as having permitted ‘their passions to become excessive by repeated violations of their inward constitution.’ He avows that mankind is in ‘a state of degradation, however difficult it may be to account for it ; and that the crime of our first parents was the occasion of our being placed in a more disadvantageous condition.’ Yet, notwithstanding these expressions, the sincerity and importance of which, so far as they go, we do not for a moment call in question, he dwells, in the course of his work, so copiously on man’s powers and capacities—on his ‘favouring virtue,’—on his having within him ‘the principle of amendment,’—on ‘its being in his own power to take the path of life,’—on ‘virtue being agreeable to his nature,’—on ‘vice never being chosen for its own sake ;’ that we cannot but consider the result as dangerous.”

I do not here make any additional criticism of my own upon the book. I only say that “evangelical” writers must either take him, or leave him—they must not tamper with him.

The passage referred to in Cowper’s “Truth,” is as follows :—

“ Is virtue, then, unless of Christian growth,
Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both?
Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,
For ignorance of what they could not know?
That speech betrays at once a bigot’s tongue,
Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong.
Truly not I—the partial light men have,

My creed persuades me, well employ'd, may save ;
 While he that scorns the noonday beam, perverse,
 Shall find the blessing unimproved a curse.
 Let heathen worthies, whose exalted mind
 Left sensuality and dross behind,
 Possess for me their undisputed lot,
 And take unenvied the reward they sought :
 But still in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
 Not blind by choice, but destined not to see.
 Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
 Celestial, though they knew not whence it came,
 Derived from the same source of light and grace,
 That guides the Christian in his swifter race ;
 Their judge was conscience, and her rule their law,
 That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,
 Led them, however faltering, faint, and slow,
 From what they knew, to what they wish'd to know."

And the epitaph, written by Coleridge for himself, is in these words :—

"Stop, Christian Passer-by !—Stop, child of God,
 And read with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
 A poet lies, or that which once seemed he.—
Oh, lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C. ;
That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death !
 Mercy for praise—to be forgiven for fame
 He ask'd, and hoped, through Christ. Do thou the same !"

While I am engaged in the task of forcing into the daylight certain things which are usually smuggled out of sight, I will add a word of caution to the general reader who, having no special sources of information, has nothing to trust to, when he buys a book, but the honour of the publisher or writer. It is this :—*Never trust, without precaution, to the literary honour of anybody who believes in "authoritative truth," for he will probably feel bound, before God, to suppress, at his own choice, whatever he himself believes to be wrong.* I have seen books entitled the "Works" of So-and-so, and sold as their "works," which omitted, without a hint of the omission, the most characteristic opinions of the authors. Sometimes I have made the discovery of the fact solely by accident; and sometimes, I have been greatly inconvenienced by it.

VOL. II., PAGE 173. LETTER TO REV. DR NEWMAN.

The following is the passage referred to. It occurs in the Tenth Essay—"Of Miracles":—

"There is, in Dr Tillotson's writings, an argument against the real Presence, which is as concise and elegant, and strong as any argument can possibly be supposed against a doctrine that is so little worthy of a serious refutation. It is acknowledged on all hands, says that learned prelate, that the authority, either of the Scripture or of tradition, is founded merely on the testimony of the apostles, who were eye-witnesses to those miracles of our Saviour by which He proved His divine mission. Our evidence, then, for the truth of the Christian religion is less than the evidence for the truth of our senses, because, even in the first authors of our religion, it was no greater; and it is evident it must diminish in passing from them to their disciples; nor can any one be so certain of the truth of their testimony as of the immediate objects of his senses. But a weaker evidence can never destroy a stronger; and, therefore, were the doctrine of the real Presence ever so clearly revealed in Scripture, it were directly contrary to the rules of just reasoning to give our assent to it. It contradicts sense, though both the Scripture and tradition, on which it is supposed to be built, carry not such evidence with them as sense, when they are considered merely as external evidences."

VOL. II., PAGE 226. LETTER TO G. H. LEWES, Esq.—(*In Memoriam*—THE "CELL" THEORY.

"And rise, O moon, from yonder down,
Till over down and over dale
All night the shining vapour sail,
And pass the silent-lighted town.

The white-faced halls, the glancing rills,
And catch at every mountain head,
And o'er the friths that branch and spread
Their sleeping silver through the hills;

And touch with shade the bridal doors,
With tender gloom the roof, the wall :
And breaking let the splendour fall,
To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds ;
And, star and system rolling past,
A soul shall draw from out the vast,
And strike his being into bounds ;

And, *moved through life of lower phase,*
Result in man, be born and think,
And act and love.”

VOL II., PAGE 317. LAST WORDS FROM THE EDITOR—
("TRANSLATION OF FORMAL BELIEF.")

“It seems to me that, carry out our view into whatever degree of perfectness we may, there must always remain somewhat of this same doubleness of aspect present with us; at all events, until the human mind becomes much more capable than it actually is, of comprehending its entire results into one single act of feeling. The impressions we receive in those distinct states of mind in which our intellect, or our moral feeling, is severally predominant, so far refuse at present to coalesce entirely, as seems in a manner to necessitate on our part a species of constant oscillation between them. According to the image that I have elsewhere employed, the alternation between the intellectual and moral aspects seems as necessary to the proper habit of the mind, as the regular inspiration and expiration by which is maintained the physical existence of our animal frame. In its instinctive desire to obtain the knowledge of Deity, the human soul expands itself to the utmost limit of which its powers of thought are capable, and in the act, gains to itself the only nutriment of its life; but while it is rejoicing in the new invigoration which it has inspired, all its attention is drawn within its own being. The blue heaven above has become to it nothing more than the mouthful of fresh air that it has swallowed. The definite consciousness which is present to it is altogether material;

the sense of Deity has altogether retired, and diffused itself into the mere recognition that it is a something everywhere to be had as soon as sought for ; the religion of the mind is only the scientific form of Pantheism. But the interval of mental contraction, and moral expiration, must follow, before the human powers can again dilate for a new breath. The mind relapses from the tension ; it falls back from the effort of *thought* upon the repose of *feeling*, and, once more, the finer sense that converses with its objects only at a distance, owns the firmament as the most definite portion of its environment. For every denial of its Theism which frustrated Science has honestly proclaimed, Religion returns with triumphant mastery, and repeats its steadfast assurance, that still an invincible reality is there."

The writer of this fine passage is SARA S. HENNELL, author of "Christianity and Infidelity : an Exposition of the Arguments on Both Sides." Arthur Hall, Virtue, & Co. 1857.

THE END.



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